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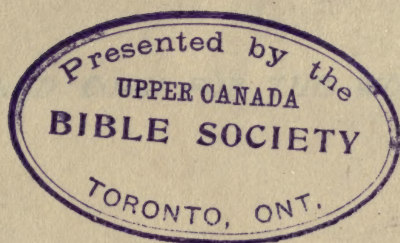
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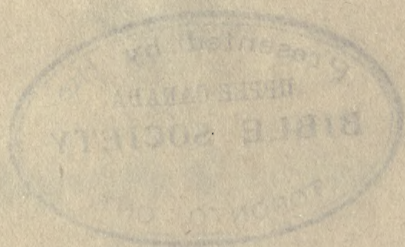
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SEED CORN FOR THE WORLD.



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SEED CORN FOR THE WORLD

A POPULAR ILLUSTRATED REPORT OF THE
BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY FOR
THE YEAR 1904-5

ASSUREDLY, IN DAYS TO COME, FATED TO
GROW ON MANY A NAKED ROCK IN HITHERTO
LIFELESS LANDS, OVER WHICH THE GLANCING
SHEAVES OF IT WILL SHAKE SWEET TREASURE
OF INNOCENT GOLD

Ruskin—Proserpina

THE BIBLE HOUSE

146 QUEEN VICTORIA STREET LONDON

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SEED-CORN FOR THE WORLD

A MONTHLY ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE OF THE
BRITISH AND FOREIGN AGRICULTURE FOR
THE YEAR 1913

THE EDITOR, THE SEED-CORN FOR THE WORLD,
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INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

EXCEPT where otherwise stated the incidents and statistics in the following pages belong to last year's record. It should be noted that this period is reckoned to end, as regards the Society's foreign work, on December 31st, 1904; and as regards its home work, on March 31st, 1905.

T. H. DARLOW,

Literary Superintendent.

THE BIBLE HOUSE,
August, 1905.

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SEED CORN FOR THE WORLD.

PROEM.

*Speak but one word to me over the corn,
Over the tender, bow'd locks of the corn.*

WILLIAM MORRIS.

FEW sights are more commonplace and familiar than a field of ripe wheat : yet few are lovelier or more suggestive. A million waving lance-heads of tawny gold, deep-dyed with the colour of sunshine, set on a million rustling stems which bend and rise again in every breeze—who shall tell us how they grow ? “ Fluted shaft or clustered pier, how poor of art, beside these grass-shafts—built, first to sustain the food of men, then to be strewn under their feet.”

Husbandry must have been the earliest of the arts. When Hesiod sang of “ Works and Days,” he meant by work the primitive task of agriculture, the labour of the ploughshare and the sickle. We vaunt ourselves vain-gloriously over modern progress, but the mightiest inventions and discoveries occurred long before history was born. The genius who first kindled a fire and the craftsman who first fashioned a wheel have left no record of themselves on earth—except the wheel and the fire, by which almost every

subsequent invention became possible. Who were the primæval fathers of agriculture? Their name and their race have vanished: yet no step in civilization was more momentous than the venture which they made when they sowed the first acre of corn. Perhaps their planting began partly by accident, as when Robinson Crusoe scattered some chance grains unawares. But from that far-off, long-forgotten day, human labour flowed into a fresh channel, and wandering tribes settled down to till the ground, and men have gone on year by year ploughing and sowing and reaping that they may win their bread out of the dust. The rippling yellow plains in Russia and Manitoba and the Argentine still bear witness to the urgency of human hunger—as did that Syrian corn-field through which Christ walked with His disciples when they plucked the ripe ears on a Sabbath day. How seldom we realize that mankind has never a full year's supply of food in the storehouse. We should starve within twelve months, were it not for God's recurring bounty in harvest.

The Kingdom of Corn.

"A wheat-sack stands open in the market—you can thrust your hand in it a foot deep, or take up a handful and let it run back like a liquid stream, or hold it in your palm and balance it, feeling the weight." They are not very heavy, these little grains: but as Richard Jefferies writes, "Wherever they are, there is empire. Could imperial Rome have only grown sufficient wheat in Italy to have fed her legions, Cæsar would still be master" of civilization. Rome, with her power and glory, is a legend now: but still the lords of the earth are they who, like Joseph in Egypt, hold the keys of its granaries. If not so openly evident as

SEED CORN FOR THE WORLD.

in ancient times, the struggle between nations is still for the ownership or for the control of corn. The harvest-fields remain the battle-fields of the world.

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Scripture is full of the mingled poetry and mystery which are involved in the miracles of seed-time and harvest. *Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone : but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. . . . That which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain ; but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him. . . . So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption ; it is raised in incorruption ; . . . it is sown in weakness ; it is raised in power. . . . As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.* Again and again the Bible brings out the manifold analogies between the material world and the world of spirit—analogies which become not merely illustrations, but actual arguments and witnesses for the unseen ; because they depend on that deep, vital harmony which subsists between the natural and the spiritual orders, and reveals them both as different aspects of one endless Life.

The Seed is the Word of God.

Our Lord Himself was equally at home in the Scriptures and in the book of Nature. He handled both volumes as though He were One with their Author ; and He points us repeatedly in His parables to the spiritual lessons of sowing and reaping. We may say that He Himself was at once the Sower and the Seed. The Word Incarnate uttered with His own lips that word which

is able to save men's souls. According to the normal metaphor of the New Testament, however, the seed stands for the Word of God. And the common dialect of Christendom has identified that Word with Holy Scripture. When Christian people call their Bible "the Word of God," they are prompted by experience rather than by mere tradition: for they are naturally thinking about those parts of the Bible in which they have heard God Himself speaking to their own consciences and hearts, bringing them life, and pardon, and joy. To quote the definition of a great modern critic, "The Word of God is nothing less than the personal expression to us of God and His will for our salvation. And the end and object of Scripture are to convey to us this message of redeeming Love, which the witness of the Spirit attests to be God's infallible Word."

The Need for Written Records.

Archbishop Trench has forcibly argued that to possess a permanent written record is one necessary condition of any historic life and progress whatever in the world. If the generations which succeed are to inherit aught from those that went before, if each age is not to begin anew from childish rudiments, if manhood and maturity are to become possible for the race, it seems plain that only thus, only through such an instrument, could this be brought about. When we consider how any great epoch—and pre-eminently an epoch in which deep spiritual truths are revealed and reasserted—is to transmit itself unimpaired to after ages, we realize that the thing is inconceivable apart from a written record, that is a Scripture. So also it is only by recurrence to such witnesses as are thus

secured for the form in which the truth was at first delivered, that any serious restoration or reformation can proceed ; only so can that which has grown old cast off the slough of age and recover the glow and vigour of its youth.

Essential to the Church's Life.

“ When the Church of the Apostolic age, with that directly following, is pointed to us as a Church existing without a Scripture—even as no doubt for some while the Church did exist with a canon not full formed, but forming, and for a little while without any Scriptures peculiarly its own—it is left out of sight that the question is not whether a Church could so *exist*, but whether it could *subsist*, not whether it could be, but whether it could *continue* to be. That for a while, under rare combinations of favourable circumstances, with living witnesses and fresh memories of the Lord's life and death in the midst of it, a Christian Church without any actual writings of its new Covenant could have existed, is one thing ; and another, whether it could so have survived through long ages ; whether without them it could have kept ever before its eyes any clear and distinct image of Him that was its Founder, or stamped any lively impress of Him on the hearts of its children. No ; that it possesses a Scripture is surely no happy accident of the Church ; but if the wonders of the Church's first beginning were not to repeat themselves continually, if it was at all to know a natural evolution in the world ; then, so far as we can see, this was a necessary condition of its very subsistence.”¹

Nevertheless, when we affirm this, we are very far from

¹ Archbishop Trench, *Hulsean Lectures*, 1845, pp. 16, 17.

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implying that Scripture is the sole and all-sufficient gift which Christ has bequeathed to men. He has perpetuated Himself on earth by His Spirit and through His Church. We misconceive of the Bible unless we think of it in the hands of the fellowship of the faithful, who, as they read its pages, are enlightened and instructed by the indwelling grace of God. In a most vital and profound sense the Church is a witness and a keeper of Holy Writ. The final commentary which interprets the Scriptures is the collective experience of the saints who have gone to this Book for their daily bread.

In truth God's Book lies very close to the hearts of faithful Christians. There, as nowhere else, we have found ourselves face to face with Him who is the Restorer of the lost, the Absolver of the guilty, the Resurrection and the Life of the dead. There we have heard His voice as the sound of many waters, and we know that none other than God Himself is able to speak such words to our souls. And so we need no arguments to convince us that Christianity and the Bible are meant to live in the closest union, and that to divorce them is a disaster and a calamity. We are persuaded that no enterprise can be more thoroughly and entirely Christian than the attempt to supply each man who can read with the New Testament in his own tongue. For after all has been said which needs to be said by way of qualification and abatement, we dare not forget the ultimate truth—that the seed is the Word of God, and not the comments and interpretations of men. The spiritual germ, which can quicken and nourish and transform humanity, resides in that Gospel of redeeming Love which is itself the essential message and content of Holy Scripture.



From the Etching by

WORDS OF COMFORT.

Hubert von Herkomer, R.A.

The Steward of modern Christendom.

One characteristic outcome of complex life is what naturalists describe as "the specialization of functions." During these last hundred years of Christian progress at home and abroad there has grown up in the economy of Providence a great institution whose privilege it is to act as the steward of modern Christendom in translating and distributing the Scriptures. It exists for one sole and supreme object. It leaves all questions of interpretation and criticism and comment to be dealt with by recognised and appointed teachers, while it labours with a single eye to place this Book which all men need in the hands of each man who is willing to receive it. The British and Foreign Bible Society co-operates with its sister and daughter organizations in other lands—in Scotland and Ireland, for instance, and on the Continent and in the United States; but it realizes with a sense of deep responsibility that each year it sends out more copies of the Scriptures than all other kindred institutions combined. The echoes have hardly ceased of that world-wide Centenary thanksgiving, at which the rulers and ecclesiastics of the greatest nations on earth combined to pay homage to the Society's achievements, and to recognize the unique position which it holds to-day as a servant of the Church of God. The chapters which follow will present a series of pictures drawn from the record of the Bible Society's multifarious service at home and abroad during the past year.

THE GRAIN IN THE GRANARIES.

Use godly means, and give God His leisure.

DR. DONNE.

No power which God has bestowed upon men is more wonderful and mysterious than the power of speech. As the late Master of Balliol pointed out, it is one of the simplest natural operations, and also one of the most complex. "Nothing would seem to be easier or more trivial than a few words uttered by a child. Yet into the formation of those words have entered causes which the human mind is not capable of calculating. They are a drop or two in the great stream or ocean of speech which has been flowing in all ages. They have been transmitted from one language to another : like the child himself, they go back to the beginnings of the human race."¹

It may be said again that speech is not so much a separate faculty as the combined expression of all our faculties, aided by looks and signs and gestures. And language possesses this dual quality—that it is really the joint operation and product of speaker and hearer. It involves in him who speaks a power not only of expressing his own thoughts, but of understanding the thoughts of those who listen. The words he utters must be such as meet with a response in his hearers. And thus a common

¹ Jowett's *Dialogues of Plato. Cratylus, Introduction.*

speech becomes the great symbol and expression of human fellowship. Perhaps one reason why we generally call the beasts dumb is that "in animals there is a lack of that sympathy with one another which appears to be the soul of language."

The Vehicle of the Gospel.

This consideration suggests to us what is really the root-difficulty in every translation from one language into another. For a difference in speech corresponds to an unlikeness in ideas and sympathies; it implies a gulf of inward division which it is the translator's task to bridge over. And his task becomes supremely difficult when he has to render the Gospel so that it can speak clearly in their own tongue to men who never heard it before. By the ordering of God's Providence, when the Bible first began to pass out into the world beyond Palestine, a wonderful language was waiting ready at hand which it could appropriate and utilize. Even in the decadence of classical Greek there was no other speech on earth at once so widely spoken and so perfect and flexible an instrument for expressing human thought, as this speech in which the loftiest philosophers had reasoned and the noblest poets had sung. Every language in its essence consists of ideas and feelings permanently fixing and embodying themselves; and thus it marks, by its very resources, how far the conquests of spirit have advanced. So we may praise God because Greek was the predestined vehicle in which the Gospel originally went forth upon its mission to all peoples and tongues. It was indeed "an infinite mercy—yea, a very primal necessity, that the Truth, where it first took body and shape, should find, as regarded language,

vessels prepared for its new wine and only waiting for a higher consecration."

Blanks in a Vocabulary.

Grievous and well-nigh insurmountable have been the hindrances opposed to God's message by languages impoverished of each noble and deeper element, so that the Gospel must weave for itself the very garments in which it could array itself and imperil the treasures it sought to impart. Consider, for example, the language of the Mosquito Indians, on the Atlantic seaboard of Nicaragua, in which the Bible Society has just aided the Moravian missionaries to publish for the first time a complete New Testament. Turning over its pages, we observe at once a number of English words, introduced because no equivalents for them exist in Mosquito. God, king, priest, prophet, angel, devil, heaven, holy, married—these are surely suggestive terms as necessary additions to a language which did not possess them. What an immense moral and spiritual blank is implied by such strange gaps in a vocabulary! We examine again, and we find that other Christian ideas have been expressed in Mosquito by phrases or circumlocutions coined expressly for that purpose. For instance, these Indians had originally no proper word for sin: the word now used by the missionaries is *saura*, which means "bad in any respect"—*e.g.*, "bad to eat"; while another term sometimes employed for sin is *wattaui*, which means literally "out-of-the-way"—the original and derivative sense of our word transgression. Though the Indians are not blessed with a naturally forgiving spirit, they have learned a phrase for "to forgive," which signifies "to take a man's fault all out of your

heart"! God's mercy is spoken of in this fashion: "The law of God's white heart." Christianity must be credited with the birth of such combinations, which by their very form and phrasing illuminate the trials of pioneer teachers and translators among savage tribes.

The Training of a Translator.

At Livingstonia, on Lake Nyassa, the Rev. D. Crawford, of the United Free Church of Scotland Mission, recently completed his translation of the New Testament in Luba, and the book is being printed by the National Bible Society of Scotland. To reduce this language to writing, Mr. Crawford says, "I spent fifteen years of happy work, trudging all over the land in my kilt, with eager ears and ubiquitous note-book, if perchance Christ might subjugate to Himself one more language of the world's Babel." During those years he has spared no pains to qualify himself for making an eminently idiomatic version, enduring hardships patiently in native huts, scorning delights and living laborious days, if by any means he might pick up some new word, phrase, or turn of expression. On one occasion, as he quaintly puts it, he parted with his last two yards of calico in exchange for a verb!

It is curious to find that in this language the noun "word" means literally "conqueror." The Luba people say that a king has no need to wield a weapon of war; he speaks the word only, and his will is done. And so the phrase "Word of God" in Luba means "Conqueror of God," and the etymology of these barbarous folk utters an omen of the victory of the Gospel.

The "Term" Question in China.

But it is not merely among savage tribes that translation bristles with problems. Revision and re-revision are demanded everywhere, if the Gospel is to utter its good news as clearly and sweetly as possible in human ears. Consider one example, from the oldest civilization and the greatest missionfield in the world. Nearly a century has passed since Morrison took his life in his hand and ventured into China as the pioneer of Protestant missions. Since that day the work of rendering the Scriptures into Chinese has been carried on with ceaseless patience and perseverance. Yet it is still undecided what are the correct Chinese equivalents for such Christian key-words as "God" and "Spirit." But the difficulty had arisen long before Morrison. In *The Ring and the Book*, our most learned modern English poet has put into the mouth of Pope Innocent XII., more than two centuries ago, a sardonic reference to the quarrel even then raging between Jesuits and Dominicans in China over the proper word which their native converts should use as the name for God.

News comes, indeed, that there is at last some prospect of reaching a general agreement on this vexed and thorny question. The Bible Society has been no partizan in the long controversy. It has been guided by the great majority of its missionary friends in China. The compromise that is now suggested may necessitate the remaking of stereotypes for all the Society's Chinese editions; but we shall welcome the proposed change if thereby the question is finally settled. In each language the Bible Society does its utmost to promote and supply one common version of the Scriptures, which, as far as possible, all Christians can accept.

MOUNT HOREB.



Versions in 390 Languages.

Yet in spite of all obstacles and difficulties, this great work goes forward continually. Two years ago the number of different languages and dialects in which the translation, printing, and distribution of the Scriptures had been promoted by the Bible Society stood at 370; a year ago it had risen to 378; it now stands at 390. This total includes at least one book of Scripture in 196 languages, at least the New Testament in 94 more, and the complete Bible in 100 more.

Outside these 390 languages enumerated in the Society's historical table, some part of the Scriptures has also been issued from other sources in at least 60 tongues besides—making a grand total of at least 450 distinct forms of human speech in which some part of the Bible has now been printed and published.

Twelve New Languages.

During this last year a dozen new names have been added to the Society's list. Six of these belong to Africa, three to Oceania, two to Asia, and one to Central America.

For North Africa a version of St. Luke, St. John, and the Acts is being printed in the *Colloquial Arabic* spoken in Algeria; while St. John's Gospel will soon be issued in *Susieh*, the speech of a Berber tribe in South Morocco.

For dwellers on the Upper Nile, St. Luke's Gospel is being printed in the language of the *Dinkas*, a powerful pagan tribe living on both banks of the White Nile in the Southern Sudan. This untaught and unclothed race inhabits the district which borders on Fashoda. We have hope that the Dinka St. Luke will prove of service to

the missions, both British and American, to which Lord Cromer recently allotted spheres of action in these regions. Still further south along the Nile, St. Mark's Gospel is now printed in *Gang*, or Acholi, translated by the C.M.S. missionaries who have opened a station in the Acholi country from their base in Uganda.

In the Equatorial East African territories of Great Britain and of Germany are found many thousands of the *Masai*, a once-dreaded raiding tribe, who are gradually settling down into agriculture. Their language has been reduced to writing, brought under the yoke of grammar, and made to express the Gospel according to St. Mark. In South Africa, the Rev. G. C. H. Reed, of the L.M.S., has translated St. Matthew's Gospel into *Kalaña*, the language of a Bantu race among whom he has laboured with signal success. Their principal home lies south of Bulawayo, within sight of the purple range of the Matoppos which guard the lonely grave of Cecil Rhodes.

St. Luke's Gospel has been published in the *Mukawa* language, spoken by a large tribe living at Cape Vogel, British New Guinea, which has been evangelized by the New Guinea Anglican Mission. For the New Hebrides, St. Matthew and three of the Prophets have been published in *Santo Bay*, a language spoken on the island of Espiritu Santo; while two Old Testament books have been printed in *Tafasao*, translated by the venerable Dr. John G. Paton.

In the lofty borderlands of North-West India, St. Matthew's Gospel has been issued in *Balti*, which is akin to Tibetan, for a race of Moslem mountaineers, whose headquarters are in Baltistan, a rugged tract lying immediately to the north of the Happy Valley of Kashmir and con-

taining some of the highest snow-peaks in the world. In *Brahui*, a tentative version of the early chapters of St. John has been lithographed for a tribe in Balochistan.

Finally, for Central America, the complete New Testament has been published in the speech of the *Mosquito* Indians, on the eastern coast of Nicaragua, at the joint expense of the Moravian Mission and the Bible Society.

Other Additions.

Of fresh books added during 1904-5 to translations begun in previous years, only a few examples can be quoted here. The complete New Testament has been issued in *Swatau*, a "Colloquial" spoken by over five millions in Southern China; and also in *Nyoro* for the people of King Daudi Kasagāma, in the heart of Central Africa, under the shadow of the great snow mountains which feed the sources of the Nile. The Psalter has been given to the *Slovaks* of North-West Hungary; the Psalms and the Book of Daniel have been printed in *Kienning* for Eastern China; Genesis and Exodus have been printed in *Tibetan*; and a second Gospel has gone forth in *Jaunsari* for hillmen to the south-east of Simla. For dwellers east of the River Paraguay, in South America, St. Luke is being provided as a diglot in *Guārani* and Spanish.

Transliterations.

In other cases an existing translation has been printed in a second set of characters, so as to make it serviceable for new readers. Thus the publication in Arabic letters of St. Mark in *Mandingo* and St. Luke in *Kabyli* makes these Gospels available for those who can read only this character; while St. John in *Hausa*, which was already

published in Arabic, now appears also in Roman letters. For thousands of emigrants from Central Europe to the United States and to Canada, the *Lithuanian* Psalms have been transliterated from Gothic into Roman characters, and St. Matthew in *Ruthen* has been published as a diglot with English.

Revisions.

Space would fail to enumerate the many great revisions on hand. Let it suffice to mention two only of the chief. The final revision of the New Testament has been completed in *Urdu*, or Hindostani, which is the *lingua franca* of Northern India. The first revision is now finished of the Union Version of the New Testament in *Mandarin*—the form of Chinese which appeals to more than 200,000,000 human beings, and may be called the real *Vulgate*, or common version, of China.

A New Home Price List.

From the end of March, 1905, the Society's catalogue of English and Welsh Scriptures has been superseded by an entirely new list. This contains a description of 390 different English, and 78 Welsh, editions and bindings—published at all prices from $\frac{1}{2}$ d. to £2. The Society's business has at the same time been thrown open to the book trade generally—a modification which will bring the Society into line with the conditions of modern commerce, and, we believe, will lead to an increased home and colonial circulation. Whilst revising the prices of the better-bound books, the cheap editions which the Society circulates as part of its Home Mission work will still be published under cost price.

Publication Abroad.

It is generally found both economical and expedient that most of our books which circulate in foreign countries should be printed abroad. Thus, for example, our Central European Agency is a great publishing centre. Nearly 300 different editions are produced in Berlin, Leipzig, Munich, Prague, Vienna, Budapest, and Bucharest. During last year a total of 1,014,198 copies in eighteen different languages left the presses employed by the Society in these cities.

Our new Catalogue of Scriptures in Chinese, which has been issued this year from the Bible House at Shanghai, is a remarkable document. Its price list enumerates 385 distinct forms of Bibles, Testaments, and separate Scripture Portions, all varying in type, paper, binding, etc., and all in the language and dialects of China. They range in price from $\frac{1}{4}$ d. to £1.

* * *

It is impossible for most of us to form any adequate conception of what such facts and figures imply : an ardent Christian writer¹ has drawn out their meaning and their moral.

“A dark awe comes over one, to think of a tongue spoken by civilized and populous nations, continually uttering men’s cares, agitations, and joys ; as continually instilling doctrines, principles, facts ; but dumb, wholly and for ages dumb, as to any sanctifying truth, any saving message. Blessed be God, it is so no longer ! It is eloquent now with every truth of that religion which is rich enough in holiness to make even a Hindu pure ; rich enough in love to melt the chains of centuries, and fuse all castes into brotherhood ; rich enough in consolation to heal the countless sorrows that follow strange gods. I cannot utter, nor yet repress,

¹ Rev. William Arthur, *A Mission to the Mysore*, pp. 129, 130.

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the veneration with which such a boon to mankind inspires me. He that benefits his species is greater than he that pleases or astounds them. But to be the benefactor of millions, and that to the end of time, is a dignity conferred on few. Let others pay their honours where they will: the profoundest reverence, the liveliest thanks I may offer to a creature, shall be reserved from genius, grandeur, heroism, but cheerfully rendered to him by whose godly toil a wide-spoken tongue is first made to utter the words whereby my Redeemer may be known, my fellow-sinners may be saved. The deed is too vast for the chronicles of earth, too pure for the praise of men. Every letter of its record will be a regenerated soul; every stone of its testimonial a redeemed family; every note of its pæan an angel's joy. He who can pursue the sunbeams, and trace, without one omission, every lineament of beauty they pencil on tree and flower and living thing, may tell the blessings that accrue when the light of life is flung on the pathway of millions, whom the darkness bewildered and destroyed."

THE SEED-BEARERS.

*Love soweth here with toil and care, But the harvest-time of love
is there.*—SOUTHEY: THE CURSE OF KEHAMA.

BEYOND the translation, revision, and publication of the Scriptures, there remains the costly and complicated task of distributing them throughout the world, so that every man who can read shall be able to obtain a copy of the Gospel in the language in which he can most easily read it, and at a price which even the poorest can afford to pay. Towards the attainment of this ideal the Society maintains its own depôts, which supply the Scriptures to all comers, in more than a hundred of the chief cities in foreign lands.

For the Foreign Mission Field.

In non-Christian countries, the missionaries of every Reformed communion are provided with the vernacular Scriptures which they need for their work, obtaining the books on terms which practically involve no expense to the boards of their own missions.

One or two recent examples will illustrate this vital department of the Society's service. Before the close of last year the revised *Telugu* Bible was published in a volume of 1,354 pages, royal 8vo. To print and bind each copy costs the Society *Rs.* 5 (= 6s. 8d.). These Bibles are being sold at *Rs.* 2 (= 2s. 8d.) among the twenty millions of our fellow-subjects in South India who speak Telugu.

Since the beginning of this present year 10,000 *Malagasi* Bibles, 5,000 New Testaments, and 10,000 copies of St. Luke's Gospel

have been granted to Missions in Madagascar. A Malagasi Bible of fair size and clear print can be purchased in the island for 1s., but its total cost to the Society is more than 2s. The Malagasi New Testament is sold at 4d., though it cannot cost the Society less than 8d. During his visit to England in 1904, Dr. King, the Anglican Bishop of Madagascar, attended a meeting of the Committee at the Bible House, in order that he might "thank the representatives of the Bible Society for the splendid vernacular Bible which the people of Madagascar have the privilege of using. My own Mission (the S.P.G.) tries to persuade the people to purchase the Scriptures, in accordance with the principle of the Bible Society, so that they may draw from the waters of knowledge which flow from the inspired Word. The Society's Malagasi version is of the utmost importance in aiding the missionaries in their work of evangelizing the people of Madagascar."

In the heart of Central Africa, where the C.M.S. Uganda Mission has achieved such wonderful success, the Bible Society supplies all the Scriptures asked for in *Nyoro* and *Masaba*, as well as in *Ganda*, having published and sent out in the last-named language over 200,000 copies. Writing from Uganda in January, 1905, the Rev. W. B. Gill, of the C.M.S., says: "Here the Bible is a mighty force; it is the foundation of all the teaching in this country. The Baganda show it in their conversation and in their letters; they are being literally steeped in God's Word. The great ambition of each and every Baganda who can read is to be the happy possessor of this, the 'one' Book. God's Word is having free course and is being glorified."

Mr. Walter C. Taylor, of the China Inland Mission, describes how nearly 9,000 copies of the Scriptures were circulated last year from our sub-depôt at Wanhsien, which he most kindly supervises. He adds: "Every facility is offered by the B.F.B.S. to missionaries in East Szechuan. . . . The Scriptures are sent, coolie hire and packing paid, by the Society, and for colportage help they also make special grants. It seems that all they can do they have done. It only remains for the missionary to say what he is wanting"

The relation between Christian missionaries and the Bible Society has always been a partnership of the happiest and most intimate kind. They furnish its chief translators and revisers, and they help to distribute the books which it most gladly and freely supplies.

The Colporteur.

To supplement and co-operate with agencies like these, and to carry God's Book into the countless villages and rural townships where the great masses of mankind have their homes, the Bible Society selects, maintains, and supervises a small army of Christian colporteurs. As a rule, these wayfaring Biblesellers are natives of the country where they travel. They have learnt to love the Gospel which they sell from door to door, and in simple, racy, homely speech they know how to commend it to their fellow-countrymen. They are recruited from many different communions. In Russia, for instance, most of our colporteurs are members of the Orthodox Church, and one of them was ordained last year by the Archbishop of Penza and appointed to a country parish. But in all cases they have definite instructions to avoid religious disputes, and in Christian lands it is very far from being their business to make proselytes. The "Bible-messenger," as the Germans call him, is not a preacher or a controversialist, but first and foremost a bearer of the precious seed. Our reports supply proof after proof of the tact and shrewdness, the patience and devotion, with which these humble men pursue their calling along the highways and byways of the world.

There are few regions, indeed, where the Society's colporteurs fail to penetrate. If our eyes could trace them as they wander, we should see them busy among the rice-

fields of India, and along the waterways of China, as well as in the crowded harbours and the lonely hamlets of Europe. We should follow their steps across the Canadian prairies and through the Australian bush, and beside the great African lakes. We should watch them sheltering in native huts on the snowy defiles of the Andes, and threading their path under trails of purple orchids through the forests of Brazil. The motto of colportage is: *Everywhere and Everybody*. And for multitudes of people their sole opportunity of coming into contact with the Gospel is through the Bible-seller and his books. After a colporteur in France had spoken to a cluster of humble folk, they all assured him: "This is the first time we have heard about the love of God."

During 1904 the Bible Society employed 950 of these colporteurs, at a cost of about £45,000. More than half of them were at work in India and China. They sold last year over 2,270,000 copies of the Scriptures—a total far above all previous records. In fact, of every five books issued by the Society, two are distributed by their agency. Huge figures like these, however, convey little meaning to the imagination. Let us try to realize what the life and service of our colporteurs actually involve, by the aid of a few pictures drawn from the log-books and diaries of their experiences.

The Hardships of Bible-selling.

To carry the New Testament everywhere with earnest insistence involves no small amount of physical hardship, and even danger. Quite apart from religious and ecclesiastical hostility, which we speak of elsewhere, our colporteurs must often penetrate where few follow them, and



INDIAN HUNTERS IN TIERRA DEL FUEGO.

endure privations which few of us who sit at home can so much as understand. As soon as winter begins the Russian colporteur travels by sledge, so that he may visit places not easily reached in summer, and may be sure of getting hold of the people. But, as our agent at St. Petersburg remarks, this work in winter involves exposure in a temperature as low as 0° Fahrenheit, and the man who continues it year after year runs serious risk of being crippled by rheumatism. On the other hand, in the burning Sudan, south of Khartum, our colporteur suffered from fever, and was many times in peril from wild beasts. In the Republic of Paraguay the Bibleman found himself entangled unawares in an insurrection, so that he was forced to leave his books and take flight in a canoe; after being captured by revolutionists, he finally escaped by shipping in a very humble capacity on a steamer. From South Malaysia one man writes: "I am now enjoying a semi-nomadic-aquatic existence, spending half my time in a bullock-cart and half in a boat. I have not seen an Englishman for the last three months, and probably shall not see one for the next six." Another writes: "All the time I was selling Scriptures in the market-place at Padang Pandjang, showers of fine cinders fell around me from a volcanic eruption."

Cholera and Leprosy.

Mr. W. H. Williams, one of our sub-agents describes an experience in Sumatra:

"After calling at nearly every house in Medan, I went up country to a place called Tebing Tinggi, where I was offered a bed, on which I found on making enquiries that a man had just died of cholera. Finally I obtained permission to sleep for three

nights on the verandah of a Malay hut, and when I left my board and lodgings cost as much as if I had stayed in a hotel. However, in three days I sold 700 books. At this town I saw lepers sleeping in the market-place on the tables where next morning meat would be sold, and the tables apparently were never washed, so I most carefully abstained from meat."

Chinese Roads and Coffins.

Returning from a trip up the Yellow River, on which he and his helper sold 7,700 books, Mr. Alfred Copp writes :

"We took to carts again, and the roads we passed over for the next eight days grew worse and worse. On the last day my cart upset, landing me in ankle-deep mud. I was thankful to escape without being crushed. To travel in a cart over the roads in Honan and South Chihli a man needs bones made of steel, or a body encased in thick indiarubber. The inns we stayed in were little better than the roads, for the flat roofs leaked at a great rate; and we saw scores of houses that had fallen down as a result of the heavy rains. One night we took refuge in a temple among the idols; two of us slept on coffins, and I myself on a coffin-lid."

By Mountain and Forest.

From the Andes, Mr. Derry's journal gives vivid glimpses of his ride from Guayaquil to Quito :

"February is considered the worst month of the year for cholera in Guayaquil. The state of the streets, and the noxious odours when the water in the pools and ditches begin to thicken and dry up under the unscreened rays of the sun, create such malaria and 'Yellow Jack' as would give pause to the most fearless Bible-seller.

"We set out to ride up the mountain paths, which are cut into ridges and furrows for foothold. These ditches across the path have now become holes brimming with liquid mud, into which the legs of the mules splash. Now and again we come to bottoms through which our animals flounder up to the girths in mire. A



A DESCENDANT OF THE INCAS.

SEED CORN FOR THE WORLD.

drizzling rain is falling. At the wayside *choza* (hut) we snatch a hasty breakfast of Indian fare, and sell a Testament and some Gospels. Away from cities in remote corners like this the *curas* cease from troubling, and the people are keen to hear us and to buy our books. Still climbing a chilly wind-blown rain searches out every crevice of our insufficient armour. We thread endless avenues of dank and moss-grown forest, ferny and gloomy and fantastic enough for Doré. The road narrows to a deep and winding ditch. My horse all but backs into a startling gulf, but I catch one glimpse down this sheer wall, and spur him forward with a leap. At night we put up at an Indian hut, and stretch our camp bedsteads in an open maize-loft overhead. The acrid reek of the firewood from below fills our dormitory with a choking fog. We dine and sup at the same time on boiled maize and gritty milk, served out of unwashed pottery by a grimy Indian dame.

“Arriving at Azogues we find a kindly landlord, but I retire to bed with malaria, so that my last four nights may be summed up in the words—fog, frost, fleas, and fever.”

Camping Out.

In Argentina in the month of May, when the nights begin to be cold, Colporteur Ysseldyk was obliged to lie down in the open air, having only a *poncho* to cover himself with. The next day God grants him much success in the work ; after which he spends that night on a heap of hay. Again, in the depth of winter, and on a rainy night, he finds no better bed than some railway sleepers. Nevertheless, during the year, he sold 4,479 volumes.

Enduring Hardness.

Rev. J. Robinson, of the Methodist New Connexion Mission in China, who superintends a number of our Chinese colporteurs in Tientsin and the surrounding districts, writes :

SEED CORN FOR THE WORLD.

"It is a privilege and pleasure to testify to their untiring zeal and energy. I regard them as co-workers of no mean order in the evangelization of China, and esteem them both for their work's sake and the fidelity and conscientiousness which they put into it. I have watched these men in all weathers; in the frost and snows of winter, in the keen searching winds of spring, in the scorching heat of summer, and in the pelting rains of autumn, but no complaint of hardship has ever reached me from any of them. I have seen some of them return to their station and their lodgings drenched to the skin, their clothes bespattered with mud, and their shoes looking a mere pulp, and when I have expressed sympathy for their distressed condition have invariably met with the reply, *Puh nai tih shih i shang kuai kan liao*—'This is nothing; my clothes will soon dry.' Special mention must again be made of our indefatigable friend and brother Mr. Chen, of Tientsin. Scarcely a Sunday passes but he introduces some new inquirer after the truth. Mr. Chen's usefulness has been a benediction to our own Church in Tientsin."

As we turn the pages of the colporteur's journals, we come upon many a flash of native sagacity and sanctified common-sense.

Leaven in the Meal.

At a French farmhouse colporteur Roland found three women kneading dough. "You come at the wrong time," they said. "We have more than twenty loaves to put in the oven." "Well, isn't it curious," replied he, "that bread should be made to-day exactly as it was made two thousand years ago?" "How do you know?" "Don't you remember what Christ told us? 'The kingdom of God is like unto leaven, which a woman took. . . .' I suppose you still use leaven?" Their attention was gained, and very soon a Gospel was sold.

Who made your Bicycle?

Colporteur Negri in Buenos Ayres met a sceptic who declared the Bible to be a tissue of lies; the creation of the world, for instance, was nonsense; everything that now exists is the product

SEED CORN FOR THE WORLD.

of nature. As the man had a bicycle, Negri asked him if his bicycle too was made by nature. "What a question! A bicycle is a work of science." "Do you then believe, my friend, that it is more difficult to make a bicycle than to make a world like ours with all its wonders? Would it not be wiser to say that the world must have been made by a much greater science?"

"Render to God what is God's."

"In these times of political and religious agitation," writes our Bible-seller at Marseilles, "I am much cross-questioned. *What are you? Who sends you?* "My opinions," I answer, "you will find all in this Book. Listen to what Jesus Christ says: *Give to Cæsar what is Cæsar's, and to God what is God's.* Have you given God what is His—and what? Your heart, your time, your life?" Then the conversation becomes personal, and invidious controversies are avoided.

God's Journal.

Colporteur Yousef, who is by birth a Nazarene, describes his experiences at Alexandria among all sorts and conditions of men.

"'What is this?' said a man to whom I offered a Testament. 'This is the *Injil*,' said I. 'Oh, it is full of untruths,' he replied, with a shrug of his shoulders. 'Who told thee so?' I inquired. 'My conscience,' said he. 'Sir, thou sayest what thou knowest to be against thy conscience, for it beareth witness to the truth of the Book.' 'I believe thee not,' said he. 'Tell me, dost thou believe all things that are written in the journals about the war?' 'There is no doubt about that news,' he replied. 'Even so,' said I, 'with this Book, which is God's journal, announcing to us His love and His power to save us from the enemy of our souls.' Then said he, 'Though I believe not all thou has spoken, yet for thy sake I will buy this *Injil*.'"

On Strike.

"In February, 1904, when the stevedores' strike at Buenos Ayres was at its height, colporteur Rohrsetzer went into their

club, where some thirty of them were gathered—mostly free-thinkers—and offered them his books. ‘Away with the Bible!’ they shouted. But, instead of leaving them alone, the colporteur began to talk, and little by little they came to like it, and listened with great attention for more than half an hour, after which their leader said, ‘Your ideas are mine too; come and speak to us again, and in the meantime we will buy some of your Bibles.’”

A Gipsy Encampment in Prussia.

Colporteur Groth was tramping through a forest from one village to another, when he suddenly lighted on a gipsy encampment deep in its recesses. With his bag of books—a sort of West Prussian George Borrow—he approached them, and began to tell these half-wild denizens of the wood the wondrous tale of Jesus as the Saviour of sinners. The gipsies grouped themselves picturesquely about him, and listened eagerly to his words. Their swarthy, black-eyed children playing around were silenced by the elders, and all was still. When Groth had finished speaking they bought his stock of Testaments, and the colporteur went on his way rejoicing that even these wanderers were hungering after the Bread of Life.

He Gave Up his Newspaper.

“The Bible! What’s the good of the Bible?” asked a cavalry man, jestingly, as he was arranging the trappings of his horse at the barrack entrance at Tudela, in Navarre. The colporteur answered that for one thing it could show a guilty conscience how to find peace, and went on to enumerate the qualities of the Scriptures. The soldier suddenly changed his tone, handled one of the volumes, and then said, “I haven’t any money; but I’ll tell you

what—I'm going to stop my newspaper for so many days till I save enough to pay for this Book."

In Camp at Capua.

During the Italian artillery manœuvres last autumn at Capua—how that name recalls the story of Hannibal and the Punic war—two of our colporteurs had marked success. Though it is absolutely forbidden to sell books to troops in the barracks and on the drilling grounds, the officers made an exception in favour of our men, so that they were free to go in and out amongst the soldiers. Some officers even encouraged the soldiers to buy the Bible, saying that they themselves were reading it.

At Gaeta, the naval fortress, where a large Italian fleet assembled last September for naval manœuvres, an officer also helped our colporteurs considerably, testifying from his own experience to the value of the Book they sold.

Taranto—the ancient Tarentum, where Pyrrhus landed to win his futile victories over the Romans—is now the second naval arsenal and dockyard in Italy. Colporteur Salerno, who is stationed here, writes: "When I go out of town to visit the province, friends in the Royal Arsenal continue my work for me there and sell the Scriptures amongst their comrades."

Far and Near.

The reports abound with picturesque glimpses of the colporteur's figure framed in many a variegated setting, yet always offering the one Book. He carries it to peasants on the fir-clad hills of the Black Forest; to sergeants and guards at the Royal Palaces of Spain; to those Waldensian valleys where the Bible is still the Book of the people; to

woodmen, floating down Russian rivers on rafts of the timber which they have felled ; to the gold and platinum miners of the Ural Mountains ; to German garrisons quartered along the Alsatian frontier ; to navvies at Chamonix excavating for the new tunnel under Mont Blanc. Last year 1,000 New Testaments were sold in and around Venice, and 5,000 copies of the Scriptures in the streets of Constantinople.

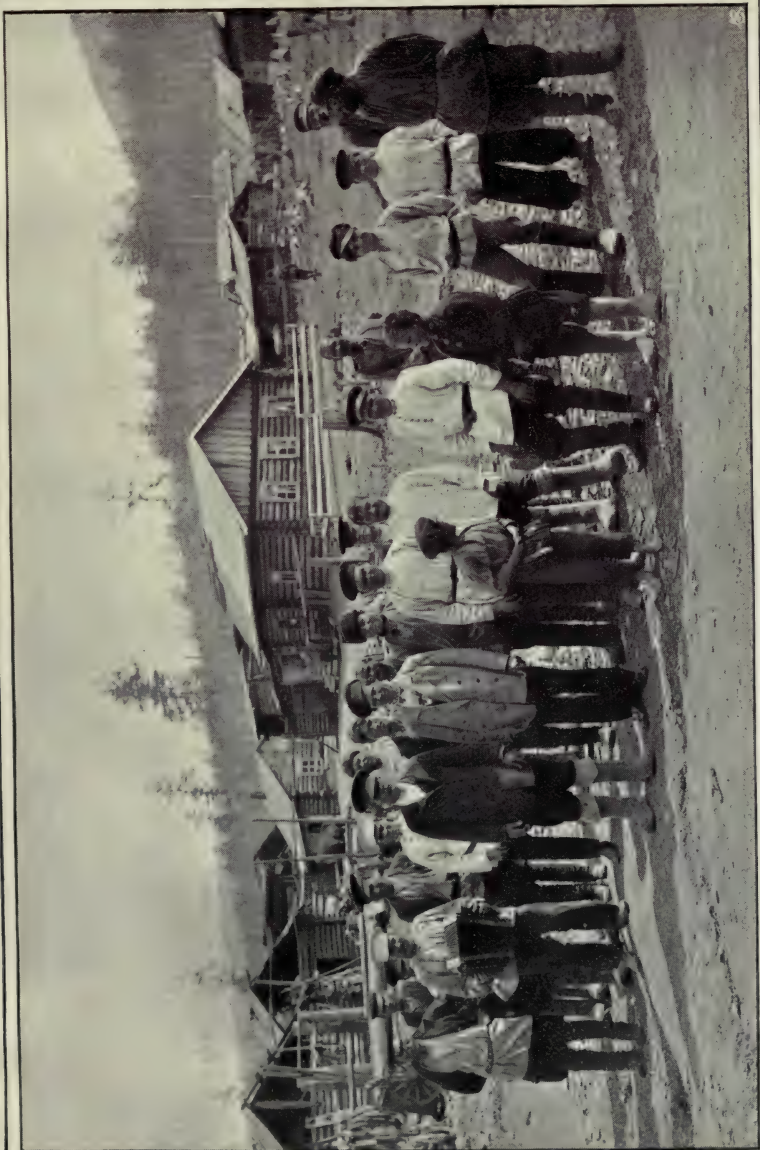
Further afield we find the colporteur sowing the good seed among the benighted peoples in the wide river-plains of the Tigris and Euphrates where human civilization was cradled, visiting the Moslem shrines of both Sunnîs and Shia'hs, carrying his books to the *Bâbis* in Persia, and to the *Yezidis*, or devil-worshippers, on the edge of the desert.

In Transcaspia.

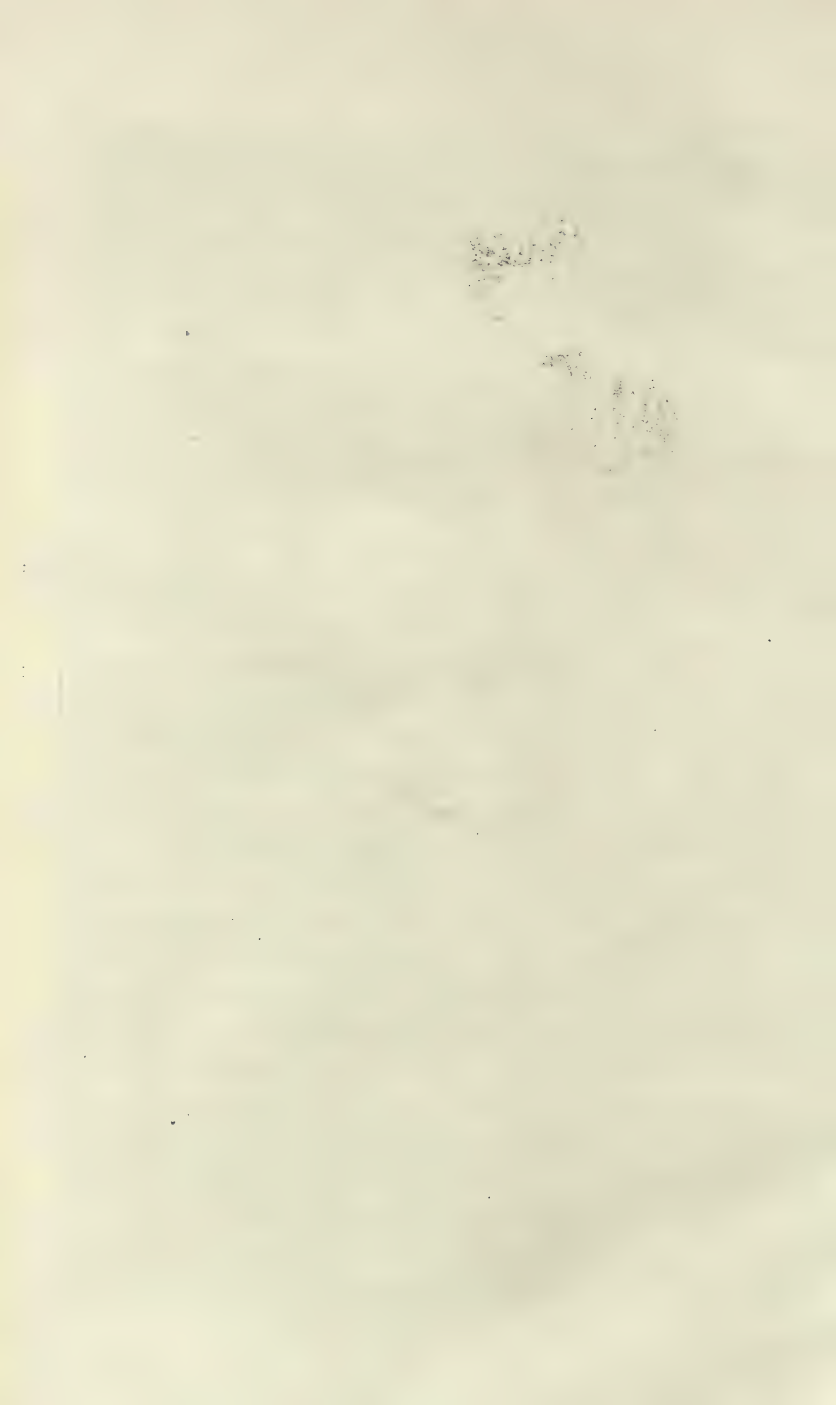
Beyond the Caspian the Russian railway runs for 1,600 miles into the steppes and table-lands of Central Asia, and beyond the limit of this railway the Bible Society has a colporteur, who makes his headquarters at Vernoy and travels almost constantly with a horse and cart. He says that in his weary wanderings he is sometimes encouraged by the good-will and help of Russian priests and Government officials, but that he has to struggle against a dull indifference in the people of these remote regions.

In Chinese Central Asia.

We have extended our efforts even beyond the field of this distant colporteur. From Andizhan, the railway terminus, the traveller proceeds by caravan to Kashgar, in Chinese Central Asia, where the Swedish missionaries have a station and are supplied by the Society with Gospels



GOLD MINERS IN THE URALS.



in Kashgar-Turki for the Muhammadan Tatars. But the population of Kashgar is Chinese as well; and accordingly we have dispatched there by the same long railway and caravan route a small stock of Chinese Scriptures; while a Chinese colporteur is being supervised for the Society by the Swedish Mission in Kashgar.

Going eastwards from Kashgar we find in Mongolia the Society's sub-agent, Mr. F. A. Larson, who on one of his journeys last year travelled in five months 1,800 miles across these immense plains, where nearly 4,000,000 nomad Mongols wander with their tents and herds, and where at present four Scandinavian missionaries are the only other Christian workers.

Strange Currency.

As may be imagined, the Scriptures are often paid for in strange currency. In Mongolia Gospels are exchanged for silk scarves and cheese. In Uganda the colporteur takes payment in cowry-shells. In Central America Mr. Castells has found most of the Indians willing to pay for the books—in coin when they have it, and where there is no coin they offer payment in kind; he has accepted eggs, starch, cocoa-beans, fowls, logwood, firewood, and sundry other oddments in exchange for the Gospels, which are offered at a very low price—a Gospel which costs the Society 2½d. to produce being sold for a trifle over a farthing. During two journeys in Northern Morocco our sub-agent accepted, besides coin, the following articles in return for Scriptures: barley, eggs, chickens, butter, straw, melons, milk, and bread.

"I am poor, I have no money," cried a Filipino who had heard of the New Testament; then, with a quickness of

thought and speech hastened by intensity of purpose, "Can't I be your *cargador* (carrier) to the next town, and so earn the price of a book?" The impassioned request was readily granted.

Weighed down by Copper.

A sub-agent in China writes: "We returned to Szechuan after two months' quick travelling, having visited more than 150 towns and villages of Yunnan, covering a distance of about 1,600 miles. Everywhere the people were friendly. In some places the Mandarins sent men to help in keeping the crowds orderly as they surged round us out of curiosity. At Skyüanwei we were busy for a long time handing out books, receiving *cash* and preaching. We exhausted our stock and returned to the inn, weighed down by copper, followed by people who still wanted books. Such experiences are rare, and can only be expected in new districts where the price and appearance of the books attract attention."

A Cycle of Cathay.

Mr. Larson travels in Mongolia with a caravan of camels and ponies. In Perak last summer Mr. Purdy made a colportage tour on elephants, which distinguished themselves by running away. The bicycle, which is a favourite companion of colporteurs in Lombardy and central France, has also proved of great service in the Philippines, while in China its appearance acts as a telling advertisement.

Colporteur Cheng has a bicycle on which he rides about from place to place, loaded up with books. These he spreads out in some street of the villages or towns he goes to, and soon gets a crowd round him to have a look at his bicycle, and hear what he has to say; so that the bicycle may be considered a splendid advertisement as well as a valuable steed which enables him to get over more ground and do far more work than he could ever hope to do without it. On several occasions he has sold between



Photo by

ELEPHANTS AT WORK IN BURMA.

P. Klier, Rangoon.

100 and 200 books in one day, and on one occasion over 200, and these mostly, if not entirely, to soldiers.

Among Chinese Soldiers.

"There are a considerable number of military camps in the large park lying some few miles to the south of Peking, and known as the Nanhaitzu, in which there are many thousands of soldiers. Situated near the centre of these, lives quite a community of small tradesmen who cater for the needs of the men. Here the soldiers congregate in very large numbers on the days when they receive their pay. Colporteur Cheng has found among them many purchasers for his books and most willing hearers of his explanations. On many of his visits tea was provided for him, and on one very hot day some of the soldiers fixed up a large umbrella to screen him from the sun, a table on which to place his books, and two forms for himself and his companions to sit on. We were told later that there was scarcely a room in the camps in which one or more copies of the Gospels might not be found, and that many of the officers had copies."

In India.

We have said nothing yet of colportage in India, where the Society supported about 170 men at work throughout last year, who sold over 200,000 books. It is believed that no expenditure of an equal amount of money in any part of the Christian Mission field is more spiritually remunerative than this. In how many villages and hamlets has the voice of the colporteur been the only one to break the silence of the ages with the good news of eternal life in Christ? In how many households—not only those he has visited in person, but those to which thousands of purchasers at *melas*, pilgrimages, *dharmshalas*, markets, fairs, and railway waiting-rooms, have carried our books to distant unknown places—has the Word of God been placed?

In the Market at Hanoi.

In Annam, our Sub-agent writes: "I arrived at Tonking in the very worst part of the rainy season. All the country was submerged beneath one immense sheet of water, in which you could only see certain islands formed by the villages. I was, therefore, compelled to sell my books in the market of Hanoi, and arrived there before 9 a.m. Picture to yourself an immense hall, similar to the Paris markets, in which there were three or four thousand chaffering Annamites, and you will have an idea of the chief market of Hanoi. Scarcely had I set up my book-stall when it was surrounded, and I needed a score of arms to take the money and to give out the books. The people thronged and hustled each other, everybody wanting to be served first. I had even, at one time, to requisition one of the native police to maintain order, and to prevent a serious uproar. About a quarter of an hour later the European overseer of the market came and informed me that I was obstructing the traffic, and that the vendors were not able to sell their goods. I was helpless, but I told him that I had hardly anything left to sell, and that I was leaving immediately. As a result, by 11 a.m. I had sold all my books—1,000 Gospels, 200 copies of Genesis, and 60 New Testaments.

Colportage by Korean Christians.

Nowhere are colporteurs more popular and successful than among the blue-gowned Koreans, where the three united Bible Societies maintain nearly fifty native Bible-sellers. The missionaries record with what readiness the Korean Christians themselves take to this work.

Mr. Gardine's testimony is noteworthy: "Our Wonsan Church, with a membership of about sixty, decided last February to undertake the support of a colporteur. They have kept this up, without assistance from the missionaries, and even increased his pay when the expense of travel made the former amount insufficient. Some of them give more than a tenth of their income to this one endeavour."

Enough has been said to illustrate the verdict of an experienced missionary in China : "The Bible Society is the best missionary to all the Missions. Without its thousand seed-scattering agencies the work of evangelism would be hard indeed. We are ever meeting with inquirers who have long treasured up copies of some portion of Scripture left by a Chinese colporteur who has never known of the germination of its precious life."

The Biblewoman.

In many of the most populous countries of the East, immemorial customs and prejudices ordain that women shall pass their lives shut away from the public gaze. Hence the message of the Gospel will only reach them if it is carried by women, who can visit and teach their secluded sisters. The success of the various Zenana missionary societies has encouraged the Bible Society to supplement their efforts by employing native Christian Biblewomen, who carry and read the Scriptures behind the closed curtains where men may not pass. Last year the Society maintained about 700 of these native Biblewomen, who were selected and supervised in connection with about forty different missionary organizations in Eastern lands ; it also helped to support more or less directly nearly 100 European Biblewomen, the majority of whom labour in the poorest districts of London. The cost of this department of the Society's enterprise was nearly £6,000.

We have only space to cite two or three instances of how effectually women can sow the good seed among women.

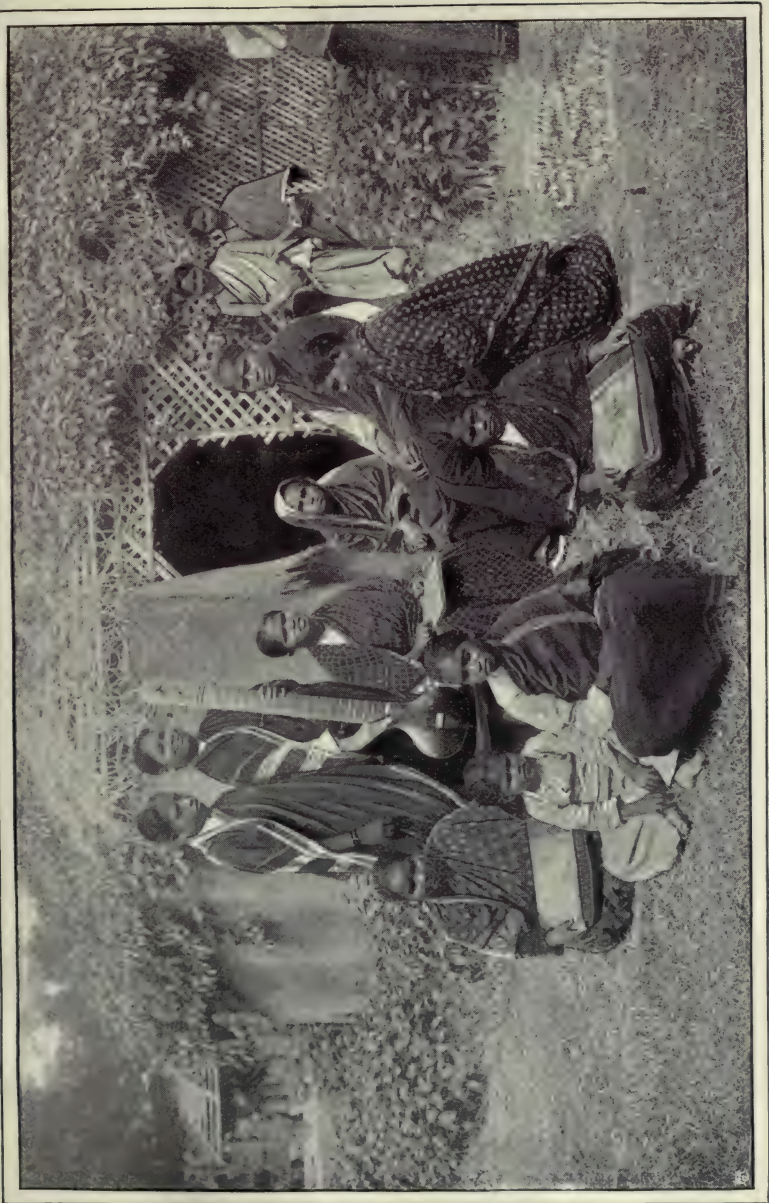
“Christ has stilled all my storms.”

While Miss Gleazar, of the B.M.S., was teaching in Cuttack, reading of Christ quieting the storm, a Bengali woman came in and began to take part, saying, “Christ has stilled all my storms.” Asked where she had heard of Him, she exclaimed : “Don’t you remember a long time ago you gave me this?” and she pulled out a ragged copy of the New Testament that had been given her eight years before, when she was a so-called “holy woman,” on pilgrimage from shrine to shrine.

The Blind Teaching the Blind.

Miss S. S. Hewlett, of St. Catherine’s Hospital, Amritsar, writes about the Biblewoman, Asho, who is blind : “In the case of two women who confessed Christ in baptism this year, and in the case of two catechumens now under instruction, Asho’s work has evidently been much blessed. They were all in-patients. Our blind Biblewomen teach Braille reading to any blind patients who come, and we are now training two blind Biblewomen who have been sent from our Blind Institute at Rajpur for the purpose. In this work of training, our three old blind Biblewomen take a very active part, having daily school in the afternoons in addition to their regular Dispensary work. They also spend their spare time in writing out Scriptures for others, often going on into the night, regardless of fatigue, with this extra and voluntary service.”

Consecrated womanhood is still one of the great reserve forces of Christ’s Church, partially and imperfectly utilized. Let us be thankful that in the vast Eastern Mission field a beginning has been made, and that compassionate Christian women thus carry the healing and consolation of the Gospel among their sisters who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.



BLIND INDIAN WIDOWS AT PANDITA RAMABAI'S HOME, NEAR BOMBAY.

THORNS, TARES, AND GOOD GROUND.

*Crown'd with rank fumiter and furrow-weeds,
With burdocks, hemlock, nettles, cuckoo-flowers,
Darnel and all the idle weeds that grow
In our sustaining corn.*

KING LEAR. IV., 4.

THE best of books in his own language conveys no meaning whatever to a person who has never learned to read ; and so one of the thorniest hindrances to the Bible Society's work is sheer blank ignorance. It is startling to find in how many countries the A B C of popular education still remains as imperfect as it was among English ploughmen and shepherds a century ago. In Spain and Portugal and Italy, for instance, two-thirds of the population can neither read nor write. According to the recently-published results of the first Russian census, which was taken in 1897, the Russians proper, including Great, Little, and White Russians, constitute two-thirds of the total population of the empire ; and of these only thirty per cent. of the males and nine per cent. of the females are described as able to read and write—that is, to sign their own names. In Egypt ninety-seven persons out of every hundred of the inhabitants, when addressed by our colporteurs, have to confess “I know not how to read” ; while only one woman in every hundred can read and write. In Brazil, where fourteen and a half millions

of people live dispersed over an area nearly equal in size to Europe, eighty-four per cent. of the population are returned as illiterate. In the Argentine it is pathetic to hear that Colporteur Selle sold many Italian Bibles to families of immigrants among whom no one knew how to read: "When I told them what the New Testament spoke of and read them some passages, they generally bought a book in the hope that some day or other they might have a servant able to read to them. It is like corn cast into dry ground, which waits until the rainfall."

The Schoolmaster Abroad.

Nevertheless, we may be thankful that this gross darkness of popular ignorance lessens and grows lighter year by year. In all civilized countries the schoolmaster is abroad, as he never was before. Even among the teeming population of China education¹ in a certain sense is universal as regards the males, although, owing to the radical defects in the system of education, a Chinese lad, after several years at school where he will have learnt to pronounce the characters of an ordinary book with precision, may still be unable to read "understandingly," so as to comprehend the meaning of the Confucian classics in which he has been taught. Western literature, however, is exercising a marked and growing influence in China. More than 150 Chinese newspapers and journals are now published, and are read freely in every city. On board the large passenger coasting steamers half the Chinese passengers will be found with books or papers. The native book-trade has attained enormous dimensions. It is more

¹ See Dr. W. A. P. Martin's *The Lore of Cathay*.

difficult to judge how many of the common day-labourers are readers ; but the fact that our Society alone sold more than a million copies of the Chinese Scriptures last year proves that reading is no uncommon art in that astonishing land, where books were already being printed when Saxon kings ruled over England. In Japan illiteracy is rare, even among the lowest classes. Tokyo, with its universities, colleges, and high schools, has probably more students for its size than any other city in the world. It is a significant fact, worth pondering, that there are seven and a half million children in the elementary schools of Japan and only four and a quarter million children in the elementary schools of Russia, although the population of Russia is three times the population of Japan.

Unbelief and Superstition.

Besides popular ignorance, the Bible has to contend with the two opposite antagonisms of superstition and unbelief. Rome was the scene last autumn of two congresses which met in the same month and stood in the sharpest possible antagonism. One was a Congress of Freethinkers, which in its discussions and resolutions made violent attacks upon Christianity. In Italy there can be little doubt that atheism is on the increase, in a form which we hardly know of in England. For example, a lawyer at Lugano recently published a book entitled *Christo non e mai esistito* ("Christ has never existed"), which has obtained great vogue and is now being issued in halfpenny weekly parts which the poorest buy greedily. Often our colporteurs, when offering a Gospel or a Testament, are sent away as impostors with the words, "Christ has never existed."

On the other hand, the jubilee of the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin was celebrated by the Roman Church last autumn with much pomp, and at Rome this festival was preceded by a Congress called *Il Congresso Mariano*, at which many ecclesiastics, both Italian and foreign, were present. These two assemblies, the atheist and the ultramontanes, represent the two opposite poles of human thought. Each of them exaggerates the other; and it must be confessed that both are remote from the faith of the New Testament, and both represent formidable opposition to the work of the Bible Society. Bishop Gore has spoken emphatic words condemning "the deplorable, the disastrous reluctance of the Roman Church to give their people the Scriptures in their own languages." It is this rooted and traditional prejudice against the open Bible which inspires so much of the public and private opposition which our agents encounter in countries dominated by the Church of Rome, where laws and usages are still in force which accord rather with the intolerance of the middle ages than with the freedom and progress of the modern world.

Intolerance in Spain.

The condition of religious liberty in Spain received striking illustration from the *Guardian* for May 17th, 1905, which published a full and careful account of the opening of the new English church at Barcelona. Although this building has been erected by English residents in that city simply for their own use, it aroused an extraordinary amount of public opposition. Cardinal Casesas y Pagés, the Bishop of Barcelona, even issued a *Pastoral Instruction* denouncing the building as "a manifest offence to the



LA GIRALDA, THE TOWER OF THE CATHEDRAL AT SEVILLE.



whole Catholic body of Barcelona"; and the civil government gave permission for the church to be opened only after two ornamental crosses which surmounted the western and eastern gables had first been removed, when the church was eventually consecrated by the Bishop of Gibraltar on May 7th. No wonder the *Guardian* declares that "in Spain toleration is still in its infancy, and hatred of Protestantism one of the foremost articles of religion." The whole incident, which occurred in the commercial capital of Spain, helps us to realize the reception accorded to a humble colporteur as he carries the New Testament into the villages and country towns of the Peninsula.

In Austria.

It is an almost incredible fact that in the very centre of civilised Europe licences are steadily refused to the Society's colporteurs. This occurs in several provinces of the Austrian Empire, including Upper and Lower Austria, Carniola and the Tyrol. In the great city of Vienna, where obscene newspapers and demoralizing novels abound on every bookstall, it is a criminal act to offer the New Testament for sale in the streets. Even when a colporteur obtains a licence in Austria, he is not permitted to carry the Scriptures with him, selling as he goes. He is only a commercial traveller offering samples; and if his goods please the customer he must send an order to our Vienna dépôt, which in due course forwards the Book to the address given, where on its arrival the customer may perhaps after all refuse to receive it. The expense and waste of time and heart-burnings inseparable from this ingenious system may be imagined. In colportage regulations Russia is half a century in advance of Austria.

The Perils of the Colporteur.

The difficulties of colportage do not end with legal restrictions. Ecclesiastical bigotry and popular fanaticism will go to strange lengths in burning Bibles and persecuting Bible-sellers. In France, for instance, a colporteur is treated as an anarchist or a spy. In Poland another is denounced as a Jew and attacked with sticks and stones. In beautiful Carinthia another is hunted out of a village as "Antichrist." In Portugal another is arrested and imprisoned on a baseless charge, and his stock of books confiscated. In Westphalia another is set upon and beaten so badly that he has to spend a week in hospital. Yet here again extremes meet: it is in the densely-peopled German black country, with its coal and iron fields and myriad factories, that socialism abounds of a militant and materialist type, and our colporteurs commonly encounter contempt rather than violence.

Colportage by Friars and Nuns.

In Sicily the Bible-seller complains that almost everywhere he meets with competition from another kind of colportage, conducted by friars and nuns with a perseverance and tenacity worthy of a better cause. We should rejoice if they were carrying about the Gospels of the St. Jerome Society, but their stock-in-trade is made up of sacred images, rosaries, scapularies, medals or saints, leaflets containing short prayers or devout ejaculations, all said to have been blessed by the Pope or consecrated by immediate contact with some sacred image, and warranted to ensure the most wonderful temporal and spiritual benefits. This retail trade in small superstitions seems to be a speciality of Sicily. The regular clergy oppose it, because

it competes with their own churches ; yet it flourishes and increases every year, for the Sicilians are superstitious beyond any other Italians, and friars and nuns who come from a distance are listened to more readily than their own local priests.

Mediævalism in South America.

No countries in the world calling themselves Christian are so intolerant as certain South American Republics, in which the temper and ideas of the dark ages seem to have taken refuge. We need only cite a single instance. At Arequipa, high up in the Peruvian Andes, a clerical journal stirred up such violent fanaticism that our colporteur was assaulted and had to be withdrawn for a time from the city, where his life was said to be in danger.

Political Prohibitions.

In Greece the New Testament in Modern Greek remains under the prohibition placed upon it three years ago. Since that time ecclesiastical and political influences have been striving to bring the Old Testament under a similar ban : but apparently their attempt has for the present failed. For Albania editions of the Gospels and the Psalter in the Tosk dialect, and printed in the national Albanian character, have been in type for the last four years ; but on political grounds the Turkish authorities still persistently forbid their publication. Here again, extremes meet : Turkish Albania and Christian Greece are the two countries in Europe where the Gospel in the vernacular tongue is a strictly forbidden book.

Cholera and Plague.

The Government of Persia still maintains the embargo

which it has laid upon the importation of Persian Scriptures into the dominion of the Shah. A visitation of Asiatic cholera made fearful ravages in Persia last year, carrying off multitudes of victims. On a low computation 200,000 deaths were due to this epidemic, and it is said that over 60,000 persons died in Teheran alone. Our Persian agents experienced great difficulties on their journeys, as many villages were strictly guarded to keep them free of infection. When the colporteurs attempted to enter, they were threatened with clubs, and in some places forbidden to procure water lest they should pollute the streams and springs. Yet the effects of cholera are not to be compared with the fearful havoc wrought in India by plague. In some regions of North India the terror of this pestilence lies heavy upon the people. We hear from Allahabad that a colporteur this year has been severely beaten and badly injured in a village where the people dreaded that he was poisoning the wells to spread the plague; and in many rural districts native Christians have suffered grievously, as they are reported to be agents employed by the Government to introduce this dire disease.

An Apostolic Missionary in Morocco.

In Moslem lands we cannot indeed be surprised at the bitter hostility often shown towards Christian workers. Yet there is something strangely moving in the following account of what one of our native colporteurs had to endure in Morocco.

“Si Mohammed made six journeys during last year, travelling hundreds of miles on foot. For each of his trips among the Berbers he has to secure a *zattatt* (*i.e.*, a guide and protector), otherwise he would constantly be robbed, and very likely murdered. The Lord has delivered him several times from the



JEW'S OUTSIDE A BUTCHER'S SHOP IN PERSIA.

hands of violent men, raising up friends even from among his enemies. On one of his journeys his *jallab*, or outer coat, and his shoes were taken from him, and when he returned to Fez his feet were cracked and bleeding. On such a journey his fare is very poor, and often for many days he subsists on nothing but dried bread and figs : once his sole food for two days was a few green figs.

“At times when I think of how he is cursed and beaten, treated as the offscouring of the earth, I praise God for his fidelity, but my heart wells up with tears at the thought of his sufferings. On one of his journeys he went through such exposure and hardship that for over a month he never felt really warm, nor was his hunger properly appeased. He was afraid to take sufficient clothing with him, for that would expose him to the rapacity of the Berbers. Wearing only the scantiest of garments, he travelled simply with his staff, his wallet, and his Scriptures.”

Official Sympathy and Help.

Turning from these gloomy shadows which darken the pages of the Society's record, it is cheering to note in how many countries our work has been materially furthered by official assistance as well as public sympathy. Thus, for example, the Scriptures are carried by rail at reduced rates in the Transvaal. In New Zealand the Union and Northern Steamship Companies, and the coach-proprietors at Gisborne have generously carried parcels of Bibles free. The North-Western Railway of India has granted a free pass for a colporteur in the Panjab. The Demerara Railway Company, and the Spronston's Steamship Company give free passages to our colporteurs in Demerara. On the steamers of the Pacific Navigation Company our agents travel at reduced fares along the Pacific coast of South America. Generous concessions are given by two railways in the Argentine, and encouragements and facilities

are also afforded by the various Republican Governments of Central America, where the Scriptures are carried by post free of cost. In Guatemala and San Salvador the Governments grant letters to our colporteurs commending them to the local authorities.

Russian Assistance.

We have often recorded most gratefully our obligations to the public authorities in the Russian Empire for very valuable assistance. The State Railways in Russia and Siberia, and many of the private railways, not only grant free passes to a certain number of colporteurs, but give free carriage to our books. The amount of railway mileage put at the Society's disposal without charge for travelling or freight comes to certainly not less than a quarter of a million miles each year. The Society also owes no small debt to the steamship companies on the great Siberian waterways. For instance, the Amur Shipping Company granted a free pass to our colporteur, with the right to take with him 30 cwt. of books for a distance of 1,400 miles, and so for the return journey ; and it ought to be recorded that through all the stress of the war, when freights ran up to fabulous figures, this privilege has never been withdrawn.

The Help of the Orthodox Church.

Side by side with this friendliness of Russian officials we find a corresponding attitude in the Orthodox Church, which happily has never ceased to encourage its children to read the Bible for themselves. Again and again our colporteurs thankfully record the help and hospitality which they receive from village priests in Russia and

Siberia. Here, for example, is a quotation from colporteur Maslennikoff, who made a long and successful voyage last summer in an open boat up the river Yug, a tributary of the Northern Dvina, and visited every cluster of habitations scattered along its banks :

“In each village of the Orthodox Church I call first on the priest, and explain to him the manner and the object of my visit—I have come in a boat and I have brought the Scriptures. Some of them are at first a little suspicious of the stranger, and I have to show them my various authorizations for colportage ; they generally end by buying from me. I have often to thank the priests for hospitality and for recommendation of my work to their parishioners.”

In the Government of Perm colporteur Noskoff found the local clergy willing to help him, and in one village the priests and scholars of a missionary school came out to bid him farewell in quite ceremonious fashion ; here he was able to distribute 145 copies of the Gospel of St. Matthew in Perm, and later on we sent to the priest of this missionary school 150 copies of the same Gospel for gratuitous distribution among the Permyaks.

Commended in a Siberian Church.

In the village of Spassk, colporteur Korataeff called on the village priest : this is one of the first visits that all these colporteurs make :

“I found him at home, and after giving me his blessing, I asked him to help me in selling God’s Word. ‘Certainly ; only let me first announce it from the church, and I will speak a few words in your favour when next my congregation gather together. See, to-morrow is a holiday ; you come to the evening service to-night, and I’ll not forget.’ So, after his short service the priest gave an address on the necessity for having the Scriptures in every house, and for each Christian to read them. Korataeff was

also able to sell books to the village school, the priest going with him to the patron and persuading the latter to purchase copies for free distribution among the poorer scholars."

On the Siberian railway, east of Lake Baikal, colporteur Gladescheff met a priest of the Orthodox Church, who enquired for what society he was selling the Scriptures. "The British and Foreign," was the answer. Whereupon the priest replied: "*Your Society is helping us to carry a heavy burden.*" That testimony expresses the precise aim and endeavour of the Bible Society in every Christian country which it enters.

Eastern Ecclesiastics.

In spite of the difficulties already referred to with regard to the admission of our modern Greek version into Greece—difficulties which appear to arise quite as much from nationalist prejudice as from ecclesiastical suspicion—we hear of Greek priests and bishops who encourage the circulation of the vernacular Scriptures. The Bishop of Lemnos, for instance, shows marked kindness to our colporteurs, and commends them to the schoolmasters in his diocese. In Bulgaria and Servia many of the ecclesiastics are also friendly and aid the distribution of the Bible. Beyond the Caucausus a colporteur who has done good work among Tatar villages in the neighbourhood of Echmiadzin reports that he was greatly helped last year by a Gregorian Arminian priest, who had been preaching to the Tatars in their own language. Among the community of Chaldean Christians at Kerkook, in Mesopotamia, our colporteur gives lessons in their school three days a week at the request of the Chaldean Bishop, who is in communion with Rome; and one of our Turkish Bibles stands

on the lectern of their church for use in reading the lessons. As a result, many of the leading Chaldean Christians appreciate the Society's work so highly that they have addressed two separate letters of gratitude to the Bible House in London.

In the Roman Church.

Welcome signs are not wanting in the Church of Rome that its authorities are beginning to modify their policy with regard to a free use of Holy Scripture. Members of Reformed Churches often fail to realize that the Roman communion is tolerant in practice of extraordinary variations according to its environment. Those who only know it as it appears at Westminster might be startled if they came to study it as it exists in Peru. And the attitude of Roman ecclesiastics towards a free and open Bible is happily inconsistent. In some countries, it is true, they could hardly be more hostile. We are the more thankful that in various quarters signs are beginning to appear of a different spirit.

The Society of St. Jerome.

Our reports have already signalized the new departure of the Roman Church in Italy, whereby the *Pious Society of St. Jerome for the dissemination of the Holy Gospels* has been allowed to issue from the Vatican press a cheap Italian version of the Four Gospels and Acts, and to circulate it far and wide at the low price of 2d. a copy. St. Matthew's Gospel has also been published separately; but the remainder of the New Testament has not yet appeared. A statistical table of issues shows that down to October, 1904, the St. Jerome Society had distributed

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265,433 copies of the Four Gospels and Acts, besides 25,950 copies of St. Matthew, in all 291,383 copies, which were apparently actual sales, mainly in Italy.

In his address delivered at Rome in the Church of Santa Maria in Aquiro on April 27th, 1905, on the third anniversary of the foundation of the St. Jerome Society, Padre Genocchi stated that during the three years of its existence it had circulated more than 300,000 copies of the Gospels in Italian, and quoted with manifest satisfaction the commendations on this enterprise published by Protestant authorities, including the Bible Society.

Although some of its renderings and notes betray a Roman bias, yet on the whole the St. Jerome version of the Gospels places our Lord's life and work and teaching faithfully before the eyes of its readers, and we rejoice most unfeignedly in this truly pious enterprise, and implore God's blessing on its continuance. Among the omens for the future of the Roman Church, we know of none which is more significant or more hopeful.

BESIDE ALL WATERS.

It is the property of Jesus Christ to be universal.—PASCAL.

ONE momentous development of these last few decades has attracted far less notice than it deserves. In all quarters of the world population is becoming more and more fluid and mobile. The wealthier classes everywhere have practically reverted to the nomad state. And in many countries the stress of poverty or the pressure of militarism at home, and the facilities for cheap, safe, easy transit to new lands across the sea, are producing migrations of working people on a scale which has had no parallel in history since the flux and welter of races at the break-up of the Roman Empire. Never in modern times have men of many races and languages been mingled in such strange confusion. Never before have such opportunities been open for our polyglot Society to put into the hands of these cosmopolitan crowds the charter of salvation in each man's mother tongue.

At European Seaports.

The chief seaports of continental Europe form gateways through which these emigrant armies take passage to the West. And so at great harbours like Hamburg and Antwerp and Naples, our colporteurs are busy in the

docks and on the quays offering their Testaments and Gospels to the travellers who declare plainly that they seek a country. At Hamburg the Society is assisted by a number of Christian ladies who are warm and generous friends of its work ; one of the most prominent members of this Auxiliary is Countess Waldersee, the widow of the great soldier who was Von Moltke's successor as Chief of the Staff of the German Army. From Silesia we hear that colporteur Pliska had noteworthy success among the Russian, Galician, and Polish emigrants who streamed through Breslau railway station last autumn *en route* to the United States. In five weeks he sold to these pilgrims over 2,000 books. "To watch a train filled with emigrants leaving Breslau, hundreds of them engaged in reading the Scriptures, is a sufficiently moving sight." At Naples colporteur Russo regularly visits both the busy railway station and the harbour, especially when he knows of the arrival and departure of emigrants. On the Adriatic coast most interesting and valuable work has been done in the port of Fiume by colporteur Stefan Fuxa among emigrants for America. Some idea of the difficulty of his task may be obtained when we state that he had to deal with people speaking a dozen different languages from all parts of Austria, Hungary, Servia, Rumania, and other Balkan lands, including Christians of every communion, Jews, Gipsies, and Muhammadans.

Crowds of these European emigrants seek new homes in North America. For settlers in the United States the American Bible Society undertakes responsibility and is supplied, at its request, with any editions issued by the B.F.B.S. which it may desire. In Canada, the population becomes increasingly polyglot. French and Italian Bible-

women labour in Montreal, and our depôt at Winnipeg supplies the Scriptures in at least thirty different languages. This last year a Gospel has been issued in Ruthen and English for the growing Galician influx into Canada, while the New Testament and Psalms in Samogit, a Lithuanian dialect, have just been printed in Roman letters for Lithuanian immigrants into North America.

The British in Greater Britain.

Nor are our own flesh and blood forgotten, when they cross the seas and colonize the outposts of empire. The Society has 125 Auxiliaries with over 2,000 Branches in the British Colonies. The English Bible is carried by its agents far and wide—into lumber-camps in the valley of the St. Lawrence, and to solitary log-huts among the snows of the North-West, and to sheep-farms

By the long wash of Australasian seas.

Thus, for example, the Bishop of North Queensland has been distributing a free grant of Bibles among scattered dwellers in the bush, far removed from all ordinary means of grace ; he writes, " My heart ached over and over again for these lonely settlers. I shall continue to take your Bibles with me into the outlying parts of my diocese." Our South Australian Auxiliary has been presenting a Bible to every operator, line repairer, or other employé on the Northern Overland Telegraph Service. Not a few of these are stationed hundreds of miles from any place of worship, and in some cases are far from neighbours of any kind except the aborigines. Of the latter a good many are connected with the Telegraph Department, and will receive Bibles in one or other of the translations prepared for native tribes of Australia.

In South America.

The spacious republics of South America attract increasing multitudes of emigrants from Central and Southern Europe. There are prophets who anticipate that another century will witness the main development of the Latin race transferred to these vast fertile regions. Already flourishing foreign colonies are dominating rich provinces in Brazil. The State of Rio Grande do Sul is rapidly filling with Germans. In parts of San Paulo Italian is heard more frequently than Portuguese. In Santa Catharina, where the new comers will soon outnumber the natives, one colporteur reports that he had marked success among the Letts, the Germans, and the Poles. A still more favourite goal for emigrants is found in Argentina, where foreigners form a fifth of the population. Every third person you meet in Buenos Ayres is either an Italian, a Spaniard, or a Frenchman. This splendid city, with nearly a million inhabitants, now stands tenth among the great cities of the world, and second only to Paris as a Latin centre. In these immense territories, where the seed is being sown broadcast of an incalculable future, the Bible Society has a manifest vocation. For it can offer to each new comer from the old world the Gospel of everlasting Love, printed in the familiar speech of the native land which he has left.

At the Gateway of the East.

To realize how the Bible can speak to men of all races and all tongues, we must take our stand where the East and the West meet and mingle, at the entrance to the Suez Canal. Perhaps no place in the world presents a more vivid panorama of the Bible Society's work than the busy



FALLS ON THE RIVER IGUASSÚ,
A Brazilian Tributary of the Parana.

harbour of Port Said. A great liner enters, laden with its freight of human souls, and before the vessel has dropped anchor a tug is alongside with her coal barges in tow. Immediately there is another arrival at the ship's side—it is a floating water-tank. Presently smaller boats draw to the gangway, laden with provisions of every kind for the ship's larder.

But it is written *Man shall not live by bread alone*. Another boat puts off from the landing-stage manned by a single boatman; the colporteur is its sole occupant. We watch him thread his way among passengers and crew aft and for'ard, in the saloon and foc'sle, to every man offering the food of his soul's life, to all making appeal against absorption in things material, reminding all of the reality of things spiritual; and it is borne in upon us how important, nay, how urgent is this ministry of the Bible Society.

At Port, Said, last year, our workers paid 4,232 visits to vessels of all classes and under all flags. The passengers and crews on board purchased nearly 16,000 copies of the Scriptures in thirty-two languages and dialects.

For Seafarers.

Here is a testimony from the Canary Islands, where our helper visits the steamers which call at Las Palmas.

“A Portuguese sailor, whose language I could not speak, was induced to buy a New Testament. Through reading it, he became a true follower of Jesus Christ. I found later on that he had entered into the Light without any human help beyond what he received from the Book itself. In our work among sailors the Scriptures play a very important part. Many of the men cannot be seen for more than a minute or two, so busy are they,

and all that we can do is to make them possessors of a Gospel or a Testament."

At Jerusalem.

The Holy City remains a focus of Christian pilgrimage from all parts of the earth. Last year 2,216 volumes of the Society's Scriptures, in twenty-three different languages—principally Arabic, English, German, Russian, and Armenian—were sold at the Jerusalem dépôt.

Bible Sunday on the Niger.

Bishop Tugwell, of Western Equatorial Africa, spent Bible Sunday, March 6, 1904, on board one of the Niger Company's steamers, and held a special Centenary service on deck, at which five missionaries were present, besides the captain of the steamer, a Nupe; the engineer, a Yoruba; and the ship's clerk, a Sierra Leonian; with several members of the crew who were Ijós and Ibos. For the lessons, portions of Scripture were read from the Gospels, the first in Ijo (or Idzo), and the second in Ibo (or Igbo), published by the Bible Society, which has also issued Gospels in the languages of the other three races mentioned.

In the Bazaars at Rangoon.

The tides of migration are not confined to Europe; they ebb and flow along the shores of the Far East. Take, for example, a city like Rangoon, with nearly a quarter of a million dusky inhabitants thronging its thoroughfares. More than half of these folk are foreigners, born outside Burma, and they are touched by hardly any agency apart from the Bible Society. Although our colporteur may himself be able to speak only one—

at most three or four—of the Babel of dialects, he carries in his knapsack a whole assortment of books, one for each man “in his own tongue wherein he was born.” Take a crowd in any of the bazaars in Rangoon. This man has come from Bombay, that from Calcutta, and another from Faizabad, others from Madras or Bangalore, and yet again others from Shanghai or Amoy. “What books have you?” asks one man, probably in Hindostani, the *lingua franca* of the East. “Have you Hindi?” “Yes!” “And Bengali?” “Yes!” “And Telugu?” “Yes!” The questions will come more and more quickly from the various members of the crowd, until sometimes a colporteur has difficulty in keeping up with the demands of his customers. It is a never-failing interest to watch the increasing astonishment depicted on the faces of the people, as book after book in a dozen different languages is handed out; and when at last the poor Oriya or Coringhee coolie comes forward and humbly asks if there is a book for him in a tone that suggests the utter hopelessness of such a request, and he, also, receives an answer in the affirmative, the astonishment becomes too deep for words.

For Emigrant Coolies.

Our Indian auxiliaries sent out last year consignments of the Scriptures in Hindi and Urdu for the use of Indian coolies in Jamaica, in Trinidad, in both British and Dutch Guiana, and to the Australian Methodist Mission working among the 23,000 Indian coolies in Fiji. Out of seven colporteurs employed in Mauritius four speak Hindi, one Tamil, one Telugu, and one English and French.

Along the shores of the Persian Gulf American mission-

aries distribute our books mainly in Arabic, Persian, Hebrew, and Turkish ; they also need the Scriptures in Gujarati for Banian traders, in Portuguese for Goanese servants, and in the languages of the Levant for Armenians.

The Overspill of China.

The overspill of China, which threatens to become one of the gravest problems of the twentieth century, is manifest in every port throughout Malaysia. We may cite a single instance of its effect on missionary enterprise. Archdeacon Sharp, of the S.P.G. Mission at Sarawak, has recently begun work in the town of Kuching, where about 30,000 Chinese have settled. At his suggestion the Bible Society has agreed to pay the rent of a depôt for the Scriptures ; while the S.P.G. will undertake charge of it, and provide three catechists to carry round and sell the books. The Chinese in Kuching wish for a room where they may be taught, and may also read such books as the Mission supplies. In and around Kuching there is a steady demand for the Scriptures, not only in Malay, but in at least four different Chinese colloquial dialects.

At Johannesburg.

In this polyglot and cosmopolitan city the Society's newly-established depôt has supplied the Scriptures last year in twenty-seven different languages, selling altogether 31,700 copies, principally in the South African vernaculars, in Dutch, and in English.

For Chinese Miners in the Transvaal.

In view of the thousands of Chinese miners imported to labour in the Transvaal, our agent at Shanghai promptly



AN OSTRICH FARM IN CAPE COLONY,

With Table Mountain in the Background.

sent to Johannesburg nearly 12,000 Chinese Scripture Portions, whose circulation has already begun. A free distribution of Gospels was also arranged for at the ports of embarkation in China to all coolies who could read, and we rejoice to learn that the reading of the Scriptures helped to pass away the weary hours of the voyagers. These immigrants include a good number of Chinese Christians, and these have attached themselves to the local churches in the Transvaal. In coming to a new country they have not left their Christianity behind. Active Christian work among them has been commenced in several centres, and for such efforts our Chinese Scriptures have already proved a boon.

In the Compounds.

Our colporteur at Johannesburg describes his visit this summer to the mines and compounds on the Rand, where he came across the fruits of missionary labour in far-off places.

"At one compound we were surrounded by bright, interesting 'boys,' lately arrived from Livingstonia, who almost bought us out of English Bibles. Many of these Blantyre boys are Christians, and are waiting for Chi-Nyanja Bibles and Testaments in their own tongue—as are also the Hereros from Namaqualand. We expect to receive these books soon.

"As a rule, we had free access to all the compounds. In some we found the Chinese indifferent, but there were exceptions. In one of the largest we were welcomed with evident pleasure, and we sold in almost every room at least one Chinese Testament. In one part a little crowd, evidently most of them Christians, surrounded me, some of them singing in Chinese, *O depth of mercy, can it be that Jesus bled and died for me?* The gladness on their faces indicated that they knew something of the true meaning of such words in their hearts. They begged us to come back

again when they had received their wages. In another compound, where the Chinamen had just arrived, they appeared delighted to see the Scriptures in their own tongue. When I entered one room, they were all gathered round a man who was reading a Testament he had just obtained from us. They fastened the door and made me sit down, while they tried to make me understand how glad they were to get the book, one Chinaman clasping it to his breast and pointing upwards.

"We meet a few in every compound who profess to be Christians, some having brought their Testaments with them from China. They, as well as the native Africans in the mines, have a good deal of time to read, and many of them who are not Christians buy Testaments, having no other book within their reach."

Labourers from Korea.

It is strange to hear of folk from what was so recently the "Hermit Kingdom" wandering into foreign lands. Yet Korean labourers are now regularly and systematically drafted to the sugar plantations of Hawaii; while others have found their way to San Francisco and to Mexico. And so Korean Scriptures have been put into trustworthy hands at Honolulu and in Mexico; while Korean New Testaments have been sent to San Francisco at the expense of native Christians there who were concerned to do good to their fellow-exiles.

The Book was really for me.

At the beginning of this chapter we spoke of the "wandering of the peoples." Enough has been cited by way of illustration to show how the Bible Society is supremely qualified to deal with the needs of these scattered exiles, by offering them God's Book in their familiar mother tongue. The value of such an offer comes out in the

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following note from the diary of a colporteur in the heart of Siberia :

“While I was going through a third-class railway carriage the other day one of the passengers said, ‘Those books are not for me.’ I thought a little; the passenger looked as if he could read; then I guessed it—he was not a Russian. ‘Here,’ said I, ‘in my knapsack is a book printed for you; only tell me in what language?’ ‘Lett.’ ‘Here you are,’ said I, handing him a copy of the Lett Bible. ‘Now, by all that’s wonderful!’ he exclaimed; then, turning to the other passengers, he said, ‘Here is a book I have been wanting to buy for ever so long. What’s the price?’ He handed me a *rouble* for the Bible, and then added, ‘Old man, thou wert right; the book was really for me.’”

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Surely such testimonies confirm the Centenary sermon on behalf of the Society in Southwark Cathedral, in which Bishop Talbot declared that “the Bible Society, whether or not we can approve of all its methods, has contributed incalculably to the work of world-evangelization.”

THOU KNOWEST NOT HOW.

When the ship-load of sacred earth from the soil of Jerusalem was mingled with the common clay in the Campo Santo at Pisa, a new flower grew up from it, unlike any flower men had seen before.—
PATER : STUDIES IN THE RENAISSANCE.

ONE of the most fascinating chapters in the *Origin of Species* discusses the means by which seeds of plants have been dispersed from one country to another. Under the head of "Occasional Means of Distribution," Darwin showed from the result of experiments that most seeds will germinate even after a month's immersion in salt water ; while out of a number of various dried plant and fruit seeds one out of ten kept afloat for a month, during which time they might easily drift a thousand miles along the currents of the sea. The great naturalist also showed how often seeds can be transported in the crops or attached to the muddy feet of migrant birds. Many seeds, again, are furnished with serrated hooks and grapnels, as though for the express purpose of adhering to the coats of wandering animals. More recently, Dr. Alfred Wallace has argued that numerous kinds of seed which are light in weight, thin and buoyant in texture, or even winged in shape, may often be conveyed over immense distances by storms and currents of air.

Flotsam und Jetsam.

These things are an allegory of the manifold methods by which the seed of God's Word can be distributed far

and wide, and scattered by unexpected means while men sleep, and carried often by what looks like chance agency or mere natural causes into the remotest corners of the earth.

The story is well known and well substantiated which tells how the first New Testament reached Japan. In 1854 a British fleet lay at anchor in Nagasaki Bay, where a force of Japanese troops had gathered to guard against any possible foreign landing. General Wakasa, who commanded these soldiers, was sailing round the harbour when he picked up an English New Testament, which had probably been dropped from one of the warships and lay floating on the water. The General's interpreter, who chanced to be a Dutchman, explained to him that this was the Christians' Scripture. Wakasa's curiosity was aroused, and he learned on enquiry that the book had been translated into Chinese. He sent to Shanghai and procured a New Testament in the classical Chinese of the Delegates' version, which can be read by all educated men in Japan. This Testament Wakasa studied carefully, in company with his brother and two family friends, but without any Christian teacher. Eight years later they applied to Dr. Verbeck, the pioneer missionary in Japan, in order that they might obtain more light on the meaning of the wonderful book ; and eventually Wakasa, with his brother and other members of the family, became baptized Christians.

The Witness of Vitality.

Surely it is one most impressive proof of the spiritual vitality of the Scriptures that they are continually evincing this quickening power, sowing the Divine seed which

springs up and bears fruit, "thou knowest not how." The ultimate evidence of all life lies in its inherent vital force ; and so beyond the external authority with which the Scriptures come to us lies this inner seal with which they are sealed. Like Him of whom they testify, they receive not witness of men ; but by all that which they are, by all that which they have wrought, they bear witness of themselves that they are of God—even the witness of power. We need not attempt any formal demonstration of this great fact, which is attested by the history of the Church and the biographies of the saints and the common experience of faithful Christians. But it will be of interest to select a few out of the many new instances which have reached the Bible House during the past twelve months, to illustrate the spiritual vitality of the Word of God as it is dispersed in all lands and takes root and fructifies among all races of men.

"I became a New Man."

In Flanders, colporteur Rampen met a Belgian who confessed that he had read, seen, and travelled much, and enjoyed all that the world can give, without possessing true peace. But five years ago, just before embarking for Argentina, he bought a Testament from a colporteur, because he thought he might read the Book as a pastime during the voyage. "The story of the man born blind went to my heart," said he, "and I prayed to Christ that He would help me also. And He did help me. I became a new man."

"Christ Died for Criminals."

"I have that Book," said a man in the north of France to colporteur Rendu, "and I can tell you that through the

simple reading of it I have found peace, though I have been one of the greatest sinners. I hardly dare confess it—I have been a murderer. In a drunken frenzy I killed a man. I was sentenced to ten years' penal servitude. While in prison I got hold of a Bible. I was the most miserable of beings, but I understood that Christ died for criminals like me. I know He has forgiven me." This man is now doing all he can to make the Gospel known among his neighbours.

Burning the Book that judged him.

Colporteur Hehn tells of a Rumanian who was the servant attached to a certain Embassy in Bucharest. On two separate occasions this man had bought a Bible, and had burnt both copies in succession because his life was condemned by what he read. But the message laid fast hold of his conscience, and in the end he bought a third Bible.

A Tatar reading our Lord's Passion.

In Siberia, colporteur Platon Petrenko has been working at Omsk, where he is very active and successful. In December, 1904, he writes :

"Last Monday the train from the west was eleven hours late. I went into the sheds where the fourth-class passengers were waiting. On the floor squatted about thirty Kirghiz Tatars, their feet tucked under them in Turkish fashion. Approaching the group, I asked if any one was able to read well aloud, as I wished them to know the contents of the Book I was selling. A young Kirghiz got up, and after testing his ability to read the Arabic character, I opened the New Testament at St. Matthew xxvii. and told him to read it aloud. As the narrative passed on to the sufferings of our Lord and His dying on the Cross, the Kirghiz all sat spell-bound. When the chapter ended there was a warm discussion on the merits of the book ; the greater part

were highly pleased, and it was not long ere they collected enough money among them to purchase two Kirghiz New Testaments, besides a copy of the Four Gospels in Russ characters."

And so the Gospel message is carried into the tents of these roaming children of the steppe.

The Seed Bearing Fruit.

From the Malay Peninsula comes word of a Chinaman converted through reading a Gospel.

"Three weeks ago a missionary from Penang paid a visit to one of his village stations, twenty miles distant. There a Chinaman came and asked to be admitted into Church fellowship. 'But,' said the missionary, 'you are an utter stranger to me; we cannot admit you until we have tested you. Besides, what do you know of the Christian faith?' 'Well,' replied the man, 'I know a little. Some months ago two Europeans (one of whom was the Bible Society's sub-agent) came here selling little books, and I purchased two of them—a Gospel and the Book of Genesis. Since then, I have been reading them both, and I have come to the conclusion that this is the true religion. Now try me for twelve months, and if I am unfaithful turn me out of the Church.'"

Welcoming the New Testament on the Kongo.

The Rev. John Bell, of the Baptist Missionary Society, sends a moving account of the way in which the Kongo New Testament was welcomed at Wathen where he has been stationed :—

"I wish that all those who are interested in foreign missions could have been at Wathen when we received the new edition of the Kongo New Testament, translated by Dr. Holman Bentley, and published by the Bible Society. Could they have seen what we were privileged to see, they would have thanked God with glad hearts for the hold with which His Word has on the affection of our Kongo Christians. On the day when our share of the boxes containing New Testaments came up, there was great



MORO GIRLS GOING TO MARKET IN LUZON.

excitement, for we had not had a copy for months. During those months many native Christians had been saving money in order to buy copies, and many of our boys and girls had been collecting bundles of firewood, carrying water, and doing other work to earn a copy ; for we do not believe in giving them away for nothing. On that day the news soon spread that the Testaments had arrived, and those who lived near by came. What excitement and rejoicing, as one after another obtained their copies and rushed off to show their treasures to others ! During the next few days the people came from far and near. Some, fortunately for them, had deposited their money weeks before, and so their copies were put on one side. But alas ! many had to go away without being able to obtain a copy, and our only hope was that at other stations they had not disposed of their supply so quickly, otherwise we should have to wait at least six months before we could get any more. It was extremely pathetic to see some of our young people go away empty-handed, sobbing as they went, sobbing as though their hearts would break. They had put their hearts and their hopes into getting a copy of God's Word at that time, and now they might have to wait six long weary months before they could get a copy—it seemed too much to bear. The tears rushed to our eyes in sympathy, but ours were also tears of joy and gladness that there was such a thirst for God's Word amongst the people. One could not help thinking how many there are in the homeland who have Bibles enough and to spare—which some of them, alas ! may not open for six months or longer at a time. Surely if they could have seen these Christians weeping because they possibly would not get a copy for six months, they would prize their own Bibles more, and thank God for the possession of His Word."

The Silent Missionary.

Nowhere does the seed of God's kingdom show greater vitality than in India, where last year the Bible Society circulated the record total of 660,000 copies of the Scriptures. The Rev. W. V. K. Treanor, Secretary of our Branch at Agra, gives the following fresh instance of the silent

missionary power of the Word of God in places where often the human interpreter does not find his way :—

“In a certain village, after preaching for a time about the need of worshipping the one true God and no other, I was explaining how Christ is the Saviour of men, when one of the villagers spoke : ‘Sir,’ he said, ‘you need not go on with this explanation ; none of us worship idols, we only believe in the one true God, and in Jesus Christ.’ I asked if he spoke for himself only, or for all the village. The men who were sitting by exclaimed with one voice, ‘We all believe on Jesus Christ.’ On inquiring how this had come about, I found that one man who could read Urdu had been given a New Testament in that language some years before, and that he had taught all the village to believe on Christ. He said that he had never received any teaching, but that from reading the Gospels alone he had come to believe. He also said he was quite ready to do anything we wished that he might become an open Christian, and he asked for a Hindi New Testament that he might instruct some in the village who read Hindi only how to read it for themselves. We had with us at the time only single Gospels in Hindi, but he promised when he came into Agra to call and see me. He did so, and I brought him to the depôt and gave him a Hindi New Testament, which he was delighted to receive.”

He read the Gospel for Twelve Years.

At a service commemorating our Centenary, held in the Mission Church at Mahoba, North India, a native Christian related his own experiences. He was formerly the *Parohit* of his village, and when a mere lad he heard the Gospel proclaimed the first time by an itinerant missionary, from whom he received a copy of St. Matthew’s Gospel. For twelve years he read that little book day by day, until its message was borne in upon his soul that Jesus Christ is indeed the Saviour of all men. At the end of those years the same missionary again came to his

village, and asked him what he thought about Jesus Christ. He replied, "He is the world's Redeemer," and at once yielded himself to Christ's claim. Such was the spiritual result of a single Gospel, which cost the Bible Society 1d. to print, and is sold by the missionaries to the people for one *pice* (i.e., $\frac{1}{4}$ d.).

A Thug and his stolen Book.

The following account is taken from the *Kaukab i Hind* newspaper of March 17, 1904 :

"Six months ago, in one of the stations of the American Methodist Episcopal Mission, a Christian died, named Jiwan Das. This man had been a highway robber, a Thug by profession. On one occasion a native preacher was on the way to preach in a certain village, when he was attacked by Jiwan Das, and his clothes were taken, as well as some Bible Portions which he had with him. The robber took the spoil home, where his son, who was attending school, begged for the books. One day the father, remembering the books, asked the boy to read to him. The lad began to read in the Book of Numbers, and chanced to open the chapter where it is written, *Be sure your sin will find you out*. On hearing this the father began to tremble, and seemed so affected that the boy asked him what was the matter, but he gave no reply. Some days after the father took the book to read himself. The same verse came to him again. He was convicted of the solemn truth, and from that time began to read, first the Old Testament, then the New, in which he learned that the Saviour from sin is Jesus Christ. Hoping to realize in his own heart this great salvation, he went to the mission station at Badaon, where he was baptized by the late Rev. Dr. Hoskins, and has lived and died an exemplary Christian."

A Rajput Evangelist.

The Rev. Dr. Dease, of the Theological School in Bareilly, North India, has communicated the following experience :

"Some years ago I was itinerating in the Terai, and was surprised to find many of the villagers familiar with parts of the Scriptures. No missionary had been in those parts before, and I was at a loss to account for such familiarity. Later I learned that a Rajput trader whose business took him to those villages, was in the habit in the evenings of reading from a book he carried with him, to whoever cared to listen, and in this way the people came to know many of the Bible stories. I sent one of my helpers to find the man, as I was anxious to meet him. After some days the helper returned and informed me that he met the Rajput and had seen the Bible out of which he read to the villagers. It appeared that in another part of the district he had bought the book from a colporteur, and on reading it had concluded that its teachings were true, and had accepted them for himself, and had ever since then sought to teach them to others. The helper told the Rajput he ought to accept baptism. He said he would do so later on, and asked me to meet him. A couple of months after I went to his village, which was in the hills, but was informed that he had died of cholera. Asking for his Bible, I was told that the villagers had destroyed it for fear that someone else should become a Christian by reading it. This trader bore a very good character in all the villages I visited. He was said to be honest and truthful. He told my helper he had never met a missionary or preacher, and whatever he knew about Christianity he had obtained from the Bible, which was his constant companion."

A New Hindu Sect.

A crucial example of the leavening influence of the Bible in India is supplied by Dr. G. A. Grierson. He sends the following remarkable extract from page 117 of the Government Report on the census taken in the Panjab in 1901, regarding a new Hindu sect¹ which has recently arisen there :

¹ *An account of this remarkable movement, written from full information by the Rev. D. H. D. Griswold, of the American Presbyterian Mission, and entitled "A Christian Fakir," appeared in the July number of "The East and the West."*

“CHĒT RĀMĪS.—This sect was founded by one Chēt Rām some thirty-five years ago.

“*His Life.*—Chēt Rām was born in or about the year 1835 at Sharakpur in the Lahore District. His father was a shopkeeper and moneylender of the Arōrā caste. Chēt Rām was a man of little education, and could read only the vernacular character used by people of his caste. When twenty-five years of age he began his present mission, and very soon gathered round him a number of disciples. He died about 1895, and after his demise his daughter was installed as his successor. He was burnt near the village of Bhūchōk, where fairs are held annually to commemorate his memory.

“*His Teachings.*—Implicit confidence in Christ as the only God was the chief basis of his teaching. A copy of the Bible was to be worn by each of his disciples round his neck. His disciples were also to carry a long rod with a cross at its head. The front portion of the horizontal part of the rod bears the following inscription :

“ ‘ Help, O Jesus Christ, Holy Ghost, God ! Read the Bible and the Gospels for salvation.—*Chēt Rāmāinī.*’

“*His Followers.*—The followers of Chēt Rām belong mainly to the poorer classes. They are to be met with chiefly in the Ferozpur, Lahore, Amritsar, Gurdaspur, and Montgomery Districts. Forty persons are always to subsist on alms and preach the teaching of Chēt Rām. These are to remain celibate all their lives. The number of his followers is increasing day by day, but Hindu converts do not mix with Muhammadan converts, and caste prejudices remain untouched.”

Dr. Grierson continues : “ To us, believers in the Master, that this sect has sprung up and is increasing day by day is a circumstance of the greatest importance. However unorthodox its doctrines may be, we cannot but recognize in them the working of the Holy Spirit, and acknowledge that this working is proceeding spontaneously from within the Hindu community, and is not directly due to external

missionary influence. No doubt missionaries sowed the seed. It has fallen in good ground. May it bring forth fruit a thousandfold."

The Good Seed in China.

Space forbids us to multiply instances ; but we must not fail to register the wonderful signs of advance which are reported from China. Last year nearly two million copies of the Scriptures were put into circulation in this vast Empire, more than a million books being sold by our own Society. There are striking tokens, moreover, that the Bible is penetrating and permeating Chinese thought. We take one or two recent examples of the power of the good seed in China.

In the autumn of 1904 His Excellency Chou Fu, then Governor of Shantung, and ruler of 36,000,000 people, after a conference with Dr. Timothy Richard, the eminent Baptist missionary, requested the Bible Society to provide him with a number of New Testaments, in order that he might forward a copy to every mandarin in his province, from the status of a county court magistrate upwards. "For," said the Governor, "by studying the Book which missionaries hold sacred, a better understanding will prevail, and peace and harmony result." Dr. Richard described this request as a special call of God, and the Bible Society most gladly granted 200 Wenli New Testaments, suitably bound, to this noble Governor, "who is a model ruler in every respect." This enabled him to give a copy to all his higher officials and to every county mayor in his province. A suitable letter has accompanied each volume, stating what it is and why the Society presents it. And coming through the Governor's hands, these Testa-



DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL AT CANTON.

ments will receive far more attention than if they were obtained through any other channel.

From a Chinese Christian.

The Chinaman whose testimony is given below has had a somewhat remarkable career. Mr. Fong Tek-heng, of Hinghoa, started life as a poor boy, but has risen to a prosperous position and gained wide influence among his fellow-citizens. His kindness to the poor and to strangers is known of all men, and his filial piety is so exceptional that it was proposed to erect a *pailow*, or memorial arch, at a cost of \$10,000, in his honour. He is a zealous preacher of the Gospel, and gives largely of his means to support preachers, students, and orphans.

“I have heard that the agent of the Bible Society has asked for news to prove that there is good in Bible distribution. Therefore I write to say that this work of Bible distribution is surprisingly precious and honourable. It is a means of bringing men into the heavenly way. I remember the great grace I received from God through the Bible distributors. By their books and preaching they bring men into the way of salvation. In the year 1886 three of them came to our village to sell Scriptures and spread abroad the Gospel. I was moved through them, and purchased fifty-two parts of Scriptures to give to the villagers. From that small beginning great results have come. Over a thousand persons have been helped God-wards. Seventeen churches have been established. Eleven persons have become evangelists. Christian students have been gathered by the hundred. We consider that the value of one soul is more than a world. What, then, is the value of all these souls gathered by Bible distribution? Let the agent consider all this and not restrict his operation. I send this to show I was saved from death (through Bible distribution) and to salute the agent. I am his younger brother. *Fong Tek-heng* of Hinghoa.”

In Closed Countries.

It is a mistake to suppose that all countries in the world lie open to Christian missions. For political or ecclesiastical reasons, missionaries still find themselves practically excluded from not a few wide and populous territories. For instance, they are not allowed to settle and teach within the Russian Empire—where, as we have seen already, the Bible Society is not only welcomed but enjoys special public facilities and favours, and last year circulated 644,000 copies of the Scriptures in sixty different forms of speech. In Abyssinia again, where Christianity survives in a strange and perverted Ethiopic form, missionaries are not at present tolerated as residents. Here, however, the Bible Society provides the Scriptures in all the principal native dialects—in Galla, in Tigrai, in Tigrinya, as well as the complete Bible in Amharic, and the New Testament and Psalms in Ethiopic for liturgical use. Availing itself of every opportunity, the Society has been able for many years to pour a steady stream of Scriptures into this closed kingdom. Its publications filter in from Aden and Eritrea; while in Egypt and Palestine Abyssinian pilgrims and traders and exiles find the book they revere in a language they understand. Whatever opposition may have been shown against missionaries, Abyssinia has nothing but welcome for the Bible. The Emperor Menelik has not only accepted with gratitude gifts of Scriptures sent him by the Society, but he has requested that a large number of copies be sent to Adis Abeba, undertaking to distribute them among his people.

In the Forbidden City.

We may quote one more instance of how the seed of

the printed Gospel is able to penetrate through doors which are closed remorselessly against every Christian teacher and preacher. The British expedition to Tibet has dispelled much of the mystery which for so many years had veiled that unknown land. Sir Francis Younghusband, in his paper before the Royal Geographical Society, stated that, taking it as a whole, Tibet was probably quite as rich as Kashmir and Nepal. The Yandock Tso he described as "the most lovely lake he had ever seen. In shape it was like a rough ring, and in colour it varied to every shade of violet and turquoise blue and green. What caused the marvellous colouring none of them could say, but one cause must be the intensity of clearness in the liquid Tibetan sky, so deep and so translucent that even the sky of Greece and Italy would look pale and thick beside it." . . . "In a lovely valley, covered with trees, rich with cultivation, and watered by a river as broad as the Thames at Westminster, hidden away by range after range of snowy mountains, lay the mysterious Forbidden City."

So far, however, from discovering a pure and lofty form of Buddhist faith, with enlightened Mahatmas for its exponents, all the reports prove that the Tibetan religion has been justly described by Rudyard Kipling as "an almost obliterated Buddhism, overlaid with a nature-worship as fantastic as the terracing of their tiny fields." One monastery at Lhasa contains not less than 10,000 monks, and another has 7,000, all described as "degraded, nasty, sensual-looking." Mr. Candler¹ gives a striking picture of a British subaltern who watched the service in the cathedral at Lhasa, and audibly ejaculated, "Thank God,

¹ In *The Unveiling of Lhasa*.

I'm not a Lama." In justice, however, this extremely corrupt Buddhism must be compared, not with the great Christian communions, but with such exceptional perversions of Christianity as we find in Abyssinia or Utah.

The Gospel at Lhasa.

One of the official interpreters attached to the British expedition, Mr. J. R. Macdonald, sends the information that many of the Society's Tibetan Gospels have been distributed both to monks and laymen at Lhasa. He sent three of these Gospels to the present Ruler of Tibet, with whom he also obtained an interview, and found that he was very anxious to know about "the white man's religion." Thereupon Mr. Macdonald had the privilege of speaking to him about the one God and His Son Christ Jesus. Although the time is not yet come when missionaries can enter Tibet, the Scriptures which the Society issues are undoubtedly making their silent but forceful way among Tibetans in the border villages, and as far as Lhasa itself.

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Such instances and examples lend strange new force to the words of an ancient exhortation¹: "Beloved, let not either the fear of thorns, or the stony rocks, or the hardness of the road, terrify us, so long as in our sowing of the Word of God we arrive at last at the good land. Let the Word of God be received by every field, by every man, whether barren or fertile."

¹ *Sermon in App. to St. Augustine's Works. VI. 597. Bened. edition.*

IN THE FURROWS OF THE BATTLE-FIELD.

The Bible, like the Church, gains fresh force and strength in times of trial.—BISHOP WESTCOTT.

THE year covered by this Report has witnessed events as tragic and as portentous as any within living memory. The struggle in the Far East is pregnant with changes which no man can measure or forecast. The centre of gravity among nations has shifted, and the Mongolian races are emerging as a new world-power, with incalculable results for the future of civilization and religion. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.

The outbreak of war creates at once a claim and an opportunity, to which the Bible Society has never been slack in responding. It makes special efforts to put the Scriptures into the hands of the troops engaged on both sides. If circumstances permit of colportage, the prices of the books are reduced to suit the purse of the soldier on active service ; and when a *gratis* circulation is advisable, copies are freely given away to the full extent of the need.

In Russia.

In European Russia the main stream of life has flowed on, little affected by the war or by local disturbances, and the Society sold over 500,000 copies of the Scriptures last year under something like normal conditions. At St. Petersburg, where the Empress established at the Winter

Palace a depôt for receiving and forwarding clothing and other comforts to the military hospitals at the front, the Bible Society was privileged to place at her Majesty's disposal some 27,000 copies of the Scriptures to be forwarded to the soldiers through this agency. Her Majesty's Secretary writes that the Empress was deeply touched by the gift, and was graciously pleased to command that the Society be thanked in her name.

Free Distribution in Sîberia.

Troops proceeding to the front from whatever province of Russia converge upon the railway line which carries them across the Urals to Cheljabinsk, on the Siberian frontier. At this important junction, and at other points on the railway further East, our agents organized an effective free distribution of the Scriptures. Official permission for this had been obtained from St. Petersburg, and Russian generals and officers encouraged and sometimes assisted in the distribution to their own regiments. Altogether about 50,000 copies of the Four Gospels or the Psalter in Russ have been accepted by these soldiers, with touching and often dramatic expressions of gratitude. Sometimes their thanks took the picturesque form of "rocking" the colporteur shoulder-high; or of kissing the book and offering up a fervent prayer for those who had sent such a precious gift. We have received many striking proofs that these books have been carefully prized and have reached the seat of war with their owners after the many changes on that long journey. We pray and believe that the Gospel message has won its way into the readers' hearts, and given them courage and consolation in their hour of need.

Several of our Russian and Siberian colporteurs have been called away to join the colours as reservists. The Christian public in Russia has taken a deep interest in the supply of Scriptures to the troops on active service, and specially to the sick and wounded and to prisoners of war. To an extent not expected by us, purchases have been made at our dépôts for the express purpose of sending books to the soldiers. And our own *gratis* circulation has been helped by a number of donations to the Society's funds, £85 having been paid in at St. Petersburg alone.

How the Books were Welcomed.

On receiving a Book a soldier will generally take off his cap and cross himself, saying aloud: "O Lord, give to the kind people good health." Sometimes an officer is surprised to see the inscription "British and Foreign," and asks: "Where do the English get the money for such a great work?" "Why do the English trouble to give Russian soldiers the Scriptures?"

At Tiumen a father and son had been called out to serve in the reserves. The father, on receiving a Gospel from the colporteur, said to his son: "Kiss this Book." Then, calling his wife, who was waiting near, he handed her the copy, saying: "See, this Book will take our place; it will remain while we are absent; it will bring comfort. Do thou draw consolation and hope from it. Remember also to be grateful to the English Society which is so good as to give it to thee."

At Cheljabinsk a General in command of a regiment purchased a Bible for himself, and went through the train with our colporteur, addressing his men as follows: "See, brothers, we have received many gifts at many stations, but the chief of them all was missing until we received this. The British and Foreign Bible Society gives you this Book free. Read it, and especially study the Psalms. The ninety-first Psalm is one that deserves our particular attention. It will cheer us on our long journey, and also help us on the field of battle." Turning to the colporteur he said: "We hereby tender our sincere thanks to the

Society whose imprint is on the title-page. We are grateful to them for remembering us, and thank every member of the Society."

For the Russian Wounded.

The sick and wounded have not been forgotten, and the Committees of the Russian Red Cross Society have co-operated in distributing thousands of copies. Patients in Manchurian field-hospitals lay poring over the little books which they had carried with them across Siberia to the battle-field, or received in the hospital wards.

One wounded soldier said: "Thank the Lord, thank the Lord! May blessings follow those who give such good books to us poor soldiers." Another read aloud St. Matt. xxiv. as far as ver. 14, *This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations*, when a listener interrupted: "I see this free distribution of the Evangel is also happening under God's guidance."

In the hospital at Omsk the head doctor accompanied the colporteur through each ward and addressed the groups of wounded soldiers as they received the copies: "Brothers, remember that this is not a Russian Society; the chief offices of the Society are in England, where there are, as you now see, kind-hearted people whose sole aim in life is to distribute the Word of God to all. I wish you, my brethren, each and all of you who have received such a gift, the Gospels, from this Society, to treasure it as sacred. Within its pages lies man's chief end in this and the future life. If you will only read with true sympathy and feeling, believe me when I say it, those who read in this spirit will feel their loads of infirmity grow lighter, their health better, yea, you will be able to return to your homes in good health, with the never-to-be-forgotten souvenir to remind you what the British and Foreign Bible Society did for you when it gave you the priceless Word of God!"

Bibles for the Russian Fleet.

While the first portion of the Baltic Fleet was passing

through the Suez Canal, our colporteur was allowed to board the warships at Port Said, through the courtesy of the Russian Consul, and sold over 800 copies of the Scriptures among the men in a day and a night. And later, when the second detachment of the Fleet passed through the canal, the colporteurs were permitted to sell over 1,300 copies of the Scriptures. Each of the admirals accepted a Russian Bible.

The following extract from a colporteur's journal speaks for itself: "*January 14th* — Early on a Russian torpedo boat ; sold one Russ Bible, six Testaments with Psalms, five Psalters, and three Gospels. On another torpedo boat ; sold one Polish and two Russ Bibles, one Slavonic and four Russ Testaments. Visited Japanese man-of-war ; sold one English and one French Bible, one English and two Italian Testaments. Afternoon : visited Russian battleship ; sold one Russ and one Polish Bible, one Slavonic and six Russ Testaments, and five Russ Psalters. On another Russian cruiser ; sold nine Russ Testaments with Psalms and sixteen Gospels.

Many of these ships are now at the bottom of the sea ; but not a few of the officers and men returning home on parole have been found, as they passed through Port Said, still in possession of their much-prized books.

Our colporteur at Sebastopol obtains a permit, renewed each year by the Admiral, to sell the Scriptures on board the vessels of the Black Sea Fleet, and pays periodical visits to the different warships, some of which have recently gained brief but unhappy notoriety. A number of Russian Testaments have been thankfully accepted by the crews of the Russian ships of war which were disarmed at more than one Chinese port. And 5,000 Russian Gospels have been recently sent out to Colombo, where many steamers are now calling with hundreds of Russian

wounded on board : " The poor fellows are most delighted to get the books."

For Japanese Troops.

As soon as war was declared energetic preparations were made by our representatives in Japan, and no fewer than 230,000 specially-printed Testaments and Gospels were given away last year¹ among the regiments of the Mikado's soldiers as they marched to the front. The military authorities co-operated with great kindness, and gave special facilities for the distribution, while the little books were almost always eagerly accepted as coming from British allies. " The book of teaching," wrote a Japanese soldier from the front, " is to us, who are on the road of life and death, the greatest gift above all things."

In the Hospitals.

In Manchuria, after the sanguinary engagements, our books, both in Russian and Japanese, were distributed in the field hospitals through the Presbyterian missionaries, who remained bravely at their perilous posts, while most of our colporteurs were able to continue on duty. According to a *Times* correspondent, " The work of the Bible Society has been much appreciated in both armies. It is curious to note that the common soldiers of the two armies, when lying wounded in the army hospitals, find that by turning up chapter and verse in their respective books they can

¹ *These gifts—and over 100,000 copies of the Scriptures also sold—represent what was done conjointly last year by the B.F.B.S. and the National Bible Society of Scotland, who are partners in Bible work in Southern Japan, Northern Japan being assigned by agreement to the American Bible Society.*

soon exchange ideas and carry on in this way quite a conversation. There is but little personal feeling between the combatants, and they easily make friends."

During the first three months of this year our agent at Kobe distributed 18,000 Gospels and 500 New Testaments among the sick and wounded and crippled soldiers who crowd the military hospitals in Japan. One Japanese soldier, recovering from typhoid, a Christian in heart, though not yet baptized, spoke enthusiastically of what the New Testament had been to him when he read it by the bright autumn moonlight on the plains of Manchuria. "It has been my comfort through my illness here in hospital," he said, "but it was best of all *there*!"

Rev. J. Williams, a veteran C.M.S. worker, writes: "The Gospels came last night. A thousand thanks for them. I find the wounded as a rule greatly prefer them to tracts. I gave out the last of my first 500 yesterday, and was almost mobbed by the convalescents in their eagerness to get copies. The present is a unique opportunity."

For Prisoners of War.

Large consignments of Russian, German, and other Scriptures have also been forwarded for the many thousands of prisoners of war, who have arrived and are still arriving in Japan; these include Jews, Poles, Cossacks, Tatars, Georgians, Finns, and Germans. A first instalment of 40 German Bibles were sent to a lady missionary of the C.M.S., who has a Bible-class of 300 German-speaking prisoners: she writes that the soldiers cast lots for the use of the books.

A Russian sergeant-major writes on behalf of his fellow-prisoners in Japan: "We prisoners of war thank you from

the depths of our hearts, and we all of us will remember you as long as we live, for the 1,100 books which have created such surprise and happiness among the prisoners. Every minute is spent in reading them."

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To certain critics it may appear a futile and ineffectual effort thus to scatter the Gospel of Peace broadcast in the blood-stained furrows of the battle-field. Nevertheless, each faithful Christian knows that Love, and Love alone, is omnipotent, and must win the final victory.

Gospels and Gunpowder.

One of our colporteurs in Morocco describes how he found himself at Azimoor, where the people were in an excited and warlike state, as their neighbours of the Dukalla tribe had begun to raid them in order to settle old scores. So the common talk at Azimoor was all about fighting. "Some said to me, 'Bring us *kortass* (cartridges), and we will buy them; what do we want with *kutoob* (books)?' I replied, 'No, buy my *kutoob* and believe their message; then you will say, "Bring us more *kutoob*: What do we want with *kortass*.'" "

Yes; the Book will conquer the cartridge at last. We shall overcome evil with good, if we have faith to oppose it with sheer and simple goodness, and with nothing else at all.

THE AFTERMATH OF THE CENTENARY

All things ripen, and righteousness also.

TERTULLIAN.

OVER and above the world-wide celebration of the Society's Centenary Festival, of which some picture was given in our last Report, this opening year of the second century of its service has been crowded with labour and eventful in achievement. Best of all, we can praise God because He has whispered in so many hearts the promise of renewal and revival. From many corners of His thirsty vineyard we hear a sound as of abundance of rain. How vitally the Scriptures blend with the deepest movements of spiritual life is illustrated by the fact that, as a result of the remarkable religious awakening in Wales, the orders for Bibles and Testaments which reached the Bible House from the Principality during the closing months of 1904 and the opening months of 1905 have been three or four times as large as usual.

Towards Unity.

Among the happiest consequences of the Centenary we are conscious of an instinctive drawing together of our far-spread Auxiliaries into closer and more practical co-operation. It will suffice to mention one signal example. Last autumn the Rev. J. H. Ritson, Secretary of the Society, spent two months in Canada on a special mission to assist

in reorganizing the Society's work. He visited most of the principal cities from Nova Scotia to Vancouver, and took part in an important Conference, attended by nearly seventy delegates from our Canadian Auxiliaries, held in September at Toronto. It was then resolved, with practical unanimity, that our friends throughout British North America should be federated into one Canadian Bible Society, Auxiliary to the British and Foreign Bible Society. From this important development we anticipate not only a more thorough distribution of the Scriptures throughout Canada, but also increased contributions in aid of the Society's work in other lands.

The Centenary Fund.

To commemorate its Centenary the Bible Society appealed for a Thanksgiving Fund of a quarter of million guineas, that it might be able more effectively to publish the Gospel of the grace of God. The appeal met with prompt and generous response at home and abroad. Special gifts came from the King, the Prince of Wales, and the German Emperor. By the end of March, 1904, the Fund had reached £135,392. Contributions have been flowing in ever since from all quarters of the world in a stream which even yet has not run dry. Here we can only mention some few striking instances of generous giving among our friends and fellow-workers outside England down to March 31st, 1905.

Gifts from outside Great Britain.

The Society's Auxiliaries in Canada and Newfoundland have raised altogether the munificent total of £10,551. From South Africa £4,839 was received, including over £500 from the Transvaal: a considerable portion of this represents gifts from



ON THE CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY: THE GAP, LOOKING WEST.

our friends of the Dutch Reformed Church. From Central Europe, including Germany, Austria, Hungary, and Switzerland, £3,837 was paid in. The Australian Commonwealth contributed £3,276, and New Zealand has remitted the liberal sum of £3,250. India and Ceylon together sent £2,966. From Italy came £804; from Egypt, £719; and from Russia and Siberia, £717. The West Indies contributed £564, while South Malaysia forwarded £551 from Singapore.

Gifts from the Mission Field.

Some of the most remarkable and encouraging gifts have been received from native Christian communities in the mission field, in eloquent gratitude for the benefits conferred on them by the Bible Society. Thus, for instance, out of £1,100 sent from China, more than half came from Chinese Christians; over 500 churches or mission stations, connected with over forty different missionary organizations, held special Centenary services and collections, in seventeen out of the eighteen provinces of China. £441 came to hand from the coast of West Africa; £200 came from native converts of the Paris Missionary Society in Basutoland; £60 arrived from the New Hebrides; and no less than £253 from Madagascar. Donors in the East included priests and laymen of the Armenian and Chaldean Churches in Mesopotamia and the Syrian Church in Malabar.

Most cheering of all was the eager and generous spirit which inspired multitudes of the smaller offerings which poured into the Society's treasury. Indian lepers denied themselves part of their pittance of food that they might have something to send. Boys in Chinese mission schools saved their scanty pocket-money, or gave up "their weekly pork and fish" for the cause. In Hyderabad the congregation of the W.M.S. brought sheep and chickens and heaps of grain. Amid the terrors of battle in Manchuria women fashioned native embroidery to be sold for the Fund. In the Solomon Group the native Christians of Ysabel Island made a collection which included strings of beads, porpoise teeth, armlets, tortoise-shells, and native cloth—with the result that thirty guineas was forwarded to the Bible House through the Melanesian Mission.

To Complete the Fund.

Early in the spring of 1905 a special effort was made, mainly through members of the Committee, to complete the Centenary Fund by gifts from private sources. Six generous contributions of 1,000 guineas each, and an anonymous donation of £3,000, besides many other gifts, often from friends who had already been liberal donors, have given an impetus to this movement. Up to the end of March, 1905, the total sum actually received in London amounted to £225,784.

Other donations have come in during the summer, including further remittances from English and Colonial Auxiliaries, notably from Upper Canada, and on July 1st the total stood at £243,000. At the end of July Mr. Robert Davies, of Bangor, sent a cheque for £10,000 towards the completion of the Fund. This splendid munificence encourages us to believe that the remaining balance—now only about £6,000—will be speedily raised. Indeed, if we include sums still in reserve, it is safe to say that, by the early autumn the quarter of a million guineas, in payments or promises, will be practically complete.

Te Deum Laudamus.

We thank God with full hearts for this fulfilment of so many hopes and prayers, this crown of so many willing sacrifices. We praise and bless His Holy Name that from all parts of the world His children have been moved to make this thankoffering as a memorial of the Society's hundred years of service.

Annual Income and Expenditure.

"Deficits are silver trumpets which are sounding the advance. Deficits are the answers to your prayers." So Sir Andrew Wingate told the London Missionary Society at its annual meeting last May. We accept the message for the Bible Society also, and we thank the speaker for teaching us that courageous word.

A summary of the Society's receipts and expenditure for the past twelve months will be found in the Appendix to this volume. It shows that last year's working involved the very grave deficit of £35,233. Moreover, the deficits announced at the six previous Anniversaries have been £17,269, £21,066, £4,851, £5,530, £23,499, and £4,891. In fact, during these past seven "years of dearth" the Society's expenditure has exceeded its revenue by over £112,000. A heavy debt has been avoided only by successive drafts upon the working capital—with the result that this capital, which is vitally necessary to the Society's business operations, has reached so low a figure that the Committee dare not consent to its further depletion.

Falling at the very threshold of the opening century, such a condition of things seems specially untimely. And now that the evangelization of the world is making new and imperious claims on the Society's resources, it will be calamitous indeed if those resources should slacken and fall away.

We recall the Bishop of Southampton's confident words in his Anniversary Sermon for the Society in St. Paul's Cathedral last May:—"No one can believe that the Bible Society can really go back." Yet a great institution may suffer, because its armies of friends are all relying on each other to make its position secure. "What its friends have

to do," continued the Bishop, "is to realize its mission more fully, to think out into clearness the grounds of its claim, to press its appeals in such a way as may reach the consciences of Christian men, and kindle the sense of obligation to respond to them through the Christian world."

The Allocation of the Centenary Fund.

It must be remembered also that the Centenary Fund is already allocated to specific objects, which were defined and adopted by the Centenary Grand Committee. The money, as a whole, is devoted to reorganization and to much-needed aggressive work—such as, for instance, our new Agency in the Transvaal and fresh enterprise in the East—beyond what had hitherto been undertaken by the Society. Again, in cities in British territory or at Treaty ports, where the rental of depôts is becoming prohibitive and their tenure is precarious, the Committee propose to secure sites and build depôts of their own; and the rents thus released will be applied to colportage. The disposal of the Centenary Fund on such lines as these will, to some extent, relieve the ordinary income, but not sufficiently to bridge the widening gap between the Society's present annual income and expenditure.

In view of the Society's financial position the Committee have already begun to reduce their home grants and their expenditure in important provinces of the foreign field—at least until the yearly funds at their disposal show a substantial growth. The Centenary Fund, as has been said, cannot be applied to the Society's ordinary existing work. Nothing is so urgently needed as an increase of normal income. The critical feature in the Society's income is this—that out of its receipts each year, the Free



Photo by

ON THE PASIG RIVER, NEAR MANILA.

Squires and Bingham.

SEED CORN FOR THE WORLD.

Contributions from its Auxiliaries form not much more than a quarter of the total. *The Society's financial position demands that these annual Free Contributions from the Auxiliaries should be increased by half as much again.*

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A hundred years ago Englishmen were challenged by an appeal with this title: *The Excellency of the Scriptures: an Argument for their more general Diffusion*; and the outcome of the appeal was to found the greatest agency for spreading abroad the Bible which the Christian Church has ever known.

The Bible Society exists in order to prepare and publish translations in all possible languages. The rapid growth of missionary enterprise and the extraordinary development of exploration have multiplied the possibilities of such translations, while the need for revising and perfecting earlier versions was never more urgent.

The Society exists to distribute God's Book in all accessible places. The world has been opened up so that almost every quarter of it can be visited, and while the cost of travel and carriage lessens, the vast number of new regions brought within the sphere of the Society augments materially its total labours.

The Society exists to bring God's Book within the reach of all sorts and classes of men. That is to say, it must sell its editions at prices which Eastern peasants and ploughmen can afford to pay; and fidelity to this principle involves rapidly increasing expenditure.

Yet ought we not to glory in such opportunities, even though by their very greatness they have become a burden? A century ago our fathers beat in vain against barriers which shut out the Bible from more than half the world.

SEED CORN FOR THE WORLD.

For us, God's hand has broken the gates of brass and cut the bars of iron in sunder, and well-nigh abolished the hindrances of race and speech and distance. Now that He has so marvellously answered our prayers and enlarged our coasts, dare we be faithless or reluctant to carry the Gospel where He has thus opened the way?

What is your own Bible worth to you? How much difference has it made to you? How much do you owe as a debt of gratitude for the Book of God?

APPENDIX.

NOTICE RESPECTING REMITTANCES.

Subscriptions and donations are received at the Bible House, 146, Queen Victoria Street, London, E.C. ; also at the Society's Bankers, WILLIAMS DEACON'S Bank, Limited, 20, Birchin Lane, E.C. ;—advice being sent to the Secretaries at the Bible House. Cheques, Bankers' Drafts, and Post Office Orders (*on the General Post Office*), should be made payable to *The British and Foreign Bible Society*, and sent to the Secretaries.

FORM OF A BEQUEST TO THE SOCIETY.

I bequeath the sum of _____ *Pounds sterling,*
free of Legacy Duty, to "THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE
SOCIETY," instituted in London in the year 1804, to be paid for
the purposes of the said Society to the Treasurer for the time
being thereof, whose Receipt shall be a good discharge for the
same.

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 1873. Bishop Mitchinson, D.C.L., D.D.
 1876. Bishop Moorhouse, D.D.
 1877. The Earl of Aberdeen.
 Earl Fortescue.
 The Rt. Hon. Sir J. H. Kennaway,
 Bart., C.B., M.P.
 1878. The Archbishop of York.
 1881. Sir William Muir, K.C.S.I.
 1883. The Bishop of St. Andrews.
 1884. Bishop Barry, D.D.
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 1885. Rev. Alexander McLaren, D.D.
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 1895. Viscount Peel.
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 The Bishop of Chester.
 Bishop Goe, D.D.
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 The Bishop of St. Albans.
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 1896. Viscount Hampden.
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 J. Trueman Mills, Esq.
 Albert Spicer, Esq.
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 The Bishop of Hereford.
 Bishop Stuart, D.D.
 The Dean of Norwich.
 1897. The Bishop of Peterborough.
 Hon. J. J. Rogerson.
 A. S. Leslie-Melville, Esq.
 Lord Radstock.
 The Bishop of Durham.
1897. Rev. J. Morlais Jones.
 1898. Rev. Canon Christopher.
 The Bishop of Newcastle, N.S.W.
 Rev. Canon Fleming.
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 The Bishop of Wakefield.
 T. A. Denny, Esq.
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 Fowler, M.P., G.C.S.I.
 Rev. Canon A. R. Fausset.
 1899. The Bishop of St. David's.
 The Bishop of Shrewsbury.
 Bishop Welldon, D.D.
 Viscount Clifden.
 Rev. Canon R. B. Girdlestone.
 Rev. W. L. Watkinson, D.D.
 Robert Barclay, Esq.
 Caleb R. Kemp, Esq.
 Henry Morris, Esq.
 1900. Bishop Ingham, D.D.
 The Bishop of Liverpool.
 The Master of Trinity.
 Rev. F. W. Macdonald.
 F. A. Bevan, Esq.
 Robert Davies, Esq.
 1901. The Bishop of Ely.
 The Bishop of Winchester.
 The Bishop of London.
 The Bishop of Lucknow.
 Sir George Hayter Chubb, Bart.
 The Rt. Hon. Sir Samuel J. Way, Bart.
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 Lord Chief Justice.
 Hon. G. E. Knox.
 Rev. Griffith John, D.D.
 Rev. John G. Paton, D.D.
 T. Fowell Buxton, Esq.
 1902. The Bishop of Calcutta.
 The Bishop of Uganda.
 The Bishop of Hokkaido, Japan.
 Rev. W. G. Lawes, D.D.
 Rev. J. Thoburn McGaw, D.D.
 Rev. W. T. Davison, D.D.
 Sir Charles Alfred Elliott, K.C.S.I.
 Sir Ernest Tritton, Bart., M.P.
 Thomas Hodgkin, Esq., D.C.L.
 Charles Finch Foster, Esq.
 1903. The Dean of Westminster.
 Rev. C. H. Kelly.
 Rev. John Watson, D.D.
 Sir Algernon Coote, Bart.
 G. W. Macalpine, Esq.
 George Spicer, Esq.
 Martin John Sutton, Esq.
 1904. The Bishop of Birmingham.
 The Bishop of Manchester.
 The Bishop of Honduras.
 Bishop Stirling, D.D.
 Rev. Andrew Murray, D.D.
 Rev. Marshall Hartley.
 Rev. F. B. Meyer.
 Rev. S. G. Green, D.D.
 Rev. D. Mackichan, D.D.
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 N. W. Hoyles, Esq., K.C., LL.D.
 Thos. Pumphrey, Esq.
 George Cadbury, Esq.
 P. F. Wood, Esq.
 G. F. Sutton, Esq.
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 1905. The Bishop of Bristol.
 Sir Geo. Livesey.
 The Hon. Justice Forbes.
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Elected May 3, 1905.

The dates indicate when members first joined the Committee.

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A. Brauen, Esq.	1897.	Joseph Pollard, Esq.	1890.
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*F. D. Outram, Esq.	1905.	A. W. Young, Esq.	1891.

** Not on the Committee last year.*

The Committee meet, as a rule, at the Bible House, 146, Queen Victoria Street, E.C., on the first and third Monday in every Month, at Half-past Eleven o'clock ; and oftener, as business may require.

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Walden, Mount Gold Road,
Plymouth.

Mr. Robert F. Crosland,
Oldfieldnook, Cleckheaton.

¹ Mr. W. Summers took charge of the Spain and Portugal Agency in addition to the N. Africa Agency, July, 1905.

² Rev. R. O. Walker was transferred from Madrid to Cape Town, August, 1905.

³ Mr. Kenmure broke down in health and returned to England, June, 1905.

⁴ Appointed from September, 1905.

⁵ Retiring September 30, 1905.

⁶ Appointed September 1, 1905.

SUMMARY.

Sentiment, apart from organization, is not to be relied on.

JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN.

THE British and Foreign Bible Society exists for one single object—to supply every man with the Holy Scriptures in his own mother-tongue. It concerns itself solely with circulating that Book which is the Charter of Christ's Church throughout all the world. And in this aim it unites Christians of almost every communion.

The Year 1904-1905.

Last year the Society issued over 5,857,000 copies of the Scriptures—complete or in parts. This total is 160,000 more than in 1903-4, but 68,000 less than in 1902-3. These are the three highest annual totals ever attained by the Society.

The Work at Home.

Of last year's issues, 1,403,662 books, or nearly 24 per cent., were in English or Welsh, and circulated mainly in the British Empire. This number is about 107,000 fewer than the figures for 1903-4. Of our English penny Testaments, 205,877 were issued, making a total of 8,372,881 during the last twenty years. The English Scriptures issued last year included 119,000 of the Society's 6d. Bible; 84,350 copies of the 10d. Bible; and 9,000 copies of the 1s. Reference Bible. The issues included 27,679 Bibles and 10,548 Testaments in the Revised Version.

In England and Wales the Society spent about £11,000 last year, mainly in direct grants of Scriptures—free or at greatly reduced rates—to the schools and Home Missions of nearly every Christian Communion, and to all the varied agencies of religious and philanthropic activity.

Nearly all the English and Welsh Institutions for befriending

the blind receive the Scriptures they use at half-price, in either Braille or Moon type.

Students at Theological and Missionary Colleges, who need such assistance, receive as gifts about four hundred Testaments in Hebrew or Greek each year. The Society also presents outgoing missionaries with Bibles or Testaments in the vernaculars of the fields in which they labour.

A large annual subsidy is given to the London Bible and Domestic Female Mission, which employs over 170 Biblewomen and Nurses, who read and sell the Scriptures in the poorest districts of the Metropolis.

Translation and Revision.

The Society's list of versions now includes names of 390 distinct forms of speech. This means the complete Bible in 100 different languages; the New Testament in 94 more languages; and at least one Book of Scripture in 196 other languages.

To print these languages over fifty different sets of characters are required. Twelve new names have been added to the list during the past year.

In type for the blind the Society has helped to provide Scriptures in many languages.

This branch of the Society's work cost £5,000 last year.

The Partner of Missions.

Its alliance with Foreign Missions was never more intimate. It has served as the great store-house and arsenal from which all British Foreign Missions must draw their indispensable supplies. No Missionary Society's request to print and publish a properly authenticated version of the Scriptures in a new tongue has ever been refused.

From the Bible Society the Church of England, with comparatively insignificant exceptions, obtains almost all the Scriptures required for its foreign missions.

The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts has procured Scriptures from the Bible Society in sixty foreign languages; and the great majority of these are not obtainable elsewhere. The Church Missionary Society uses more

SEED CORN FOR THE WORLD.

than a hundred different translations, of which over ninety come from the Bible House. Similar assistance is rendered to the Universities' Mission to Central Africa, the South American Missionary Society, and the Melanesian Mission.

Nonconformist Foreign Missions, with some slender exceptions, obtain the bulk of all the Scriptures they use, directly or indirectly, from the Bible Society.

It furnishes the London Missionary Society with the Scriptures in fifty different languages—and the Wesleyan Missionary Societies of Great Britain and her Colonies with over forty versions. Presbyterian Missions throughout the world use about sixty of its versions. It has published the Kongo version for the Baptist Missionary Society, and also supplies many of their stations in China and Jamaica. The China Inland Mission and other undenominational societies practically obtain all the Scriptures they ask for.

Plainly, each fresh advance in the mission-field becomes an imperious demand on the Bible Society. As a rule, Scriptures for the foreign field are granted on such terms that they practically cost nothing to the missionary boards which receive them. At best, only a fraction of what the Bible Society expends on these missionary versions can ever come back to it as the result of sales.

In Foreign Lands.

The Society maintains depôts in more than 100 of the chief cities of the world.

It employed 950 native Christian colporteurs, who were at work throughout 1904—more than half of them in India and China—supervised by the Society's foreign Agents, or its missionary friends.

These colporteurs sold last year the record number of over 2,270,000 copies. The Society's grants for colportage during 1904 amounted to about £45,000.

It supports 700 native Christian Biblewomen in the East, in connection with forty different missionary organizations. The total annual grants for Biblewomen amount to about £6,000.

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Auxiliaries.

The Society has about 5,800 Auxiliaries, Branches and Associations in England and Wales, where 4,178 meetings were held and 1,757 sermons preached on its behalf during 1904. These are exclusive of 2,056 Centenary meetings and 18,151 Centenary sermons of which record has reached us.

Outside these islands the Society has more than 2,200 Auxiliaries and Branches, mainly in the British Colonies, many of which undertake vigorous local work besides remitting Free Contributions to London.

Finance.

The Society's income in 1904-1905 from all sources, apart from the Centenary Fund, was £218,589; while it spent £253,822. This leaves, on the year's working, a deficit of £35,233. The last seven years' deficits amount to over £112,000.

In view of the Society's financial position the Committee have already begun to reduce their grants at home and their expenditure in important provinces of the foreign field—at least until the yearly funds at their disposal show a substantial growth. Nothing is therefore so urgently needed as an increase of normal income.

Open Doors.

Hundreds of peoples and tribes still remain without a single Gospel in their own tongue. In hundreds of languages imperfect translations need to be revised, and unfinished Bibles need to be made complete.

The enterprises and triumphs of Christian Missions are creating so many new and urgent claims upon the Bible Society. The spread of education, especially in foreign countries, is raising up millions of new readers every year.

In all quarters of the world closed doors are opening and eager hands are stretching out to welcome the Book of God.

SINCE IT WAS FOUNDED IN 1804 THE BIBLE SOCIETY HAS CIRCULATED OVER 192 MILLION COPIES OF THE SCRIPTURES.

SEED CORN FOR THE WORLD.

CONDENSED STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING

RECEIPTS.

FROM SALES OF SCRIPTURES.

Trade Depôts, Auxiliary and other Societies	£39,939 8 8
Sales in Society's Foreign Agencies ...	56,218 16 2
	<hr/>
	96,158 4 10

FREE INCOME.

Free Contributions, Annual Subscrip- tions, Donations, Collections and Special Funds	83,493 5 2
Legacies (paid in London)	32,508 12 7
Dividends on Stock, Interest, Exchange, &c.	6,429 8 0
	<hr/>
	218,589 10 7
From Reserve Fund	35,232 17 11
	<hr/>
	£253,822 8 6
	<hr/>

BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

AND PAYMENTS OF THE BIBLE SOCIETY.

MARCH 31ST, 1905.

PAYMENTS.

For translating and revising the Scriptures and for paper, printing and binding ...	£119,454 14 0
For rent, taxes, establishment, etc., of over 100 Depôts and Warehouses in the chief cities of the world, grants to other Depôts, salaries of foreign Agents, Depositories, &c.	56,378 2 2
Towards maintenance of (1,660) Colporteurs and Biblewomen	48,862 5 2
For home establishment, officers, district sec- retaries, travelling, reports, literature, staff needed for the despatch of Scriptures from London and grants to assist kindred so- cieties in Bible distribution . . .	29,127 7 2

£253,822 8 6

THE BIBLE SOCIETY'S MAGAZINES, &c.

The Bible in the World

A Monthly Record of the Work of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Profusely illustrated. Price 1d.

The Bible Society Gleanings

For Young People. Profusely illustrated. Price $\frac{1}{2}$ d. a month.

The Gospel in Many Tongues

A pamphlet containing St. John iii. 16, in 403 of the languages and dialects in which the Society has printed or circulated the Scriptures. New and Enlarged Centenary Edition, stitched, 1d. ; cloth, 3d.

The Story of Mary Jones and Her Bible

Paper, 1d. ; cloth, plain edges, 6d. ; cloth, gilt sides and edges, 9d. Also for the Blind (Moon's type), 4s.

Illustrated Insets

Describing the Society's work, are published quarterly, 4 pp., and will be supplied free in quantities for insertion in parochial and congregational magazines.

Pamphlets and Papers

Describing the operations of the Bible Society's world-wide work—suitable for enclosure in letters, distribution at Drawing-Room Meetings, Garden Parties, and Public Meetings—are supplied gratis at the Bible House, 146, Queen Victoria Street.

Note.—All orders, addressed to 146, Queen Victoria Street, E.C., must be accompanied by payment, including cost of postage when required by post ; or booking fee of 2d. if to be enclosed in book-seller's parcel.

THE BIBLE SOCIETY'S MAGAZINE

The Bible in the World

A MONTHLY RECORD OF THE WORK OF THE BIBLE SOCIETY IN THE
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The Bible Society's Gleamings

THE BIBLE SOCIETY'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE. PRICE 3s. 6d.

The Gospel in Many Tongues

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